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Why my fight goes on PAGE 13



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How children are calling the shots this Christmas
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£150m bill for killing 'at risk' cattle

Beef export ban remains despite cull

By Philip Webster and Charlie Bremner

EUROPE told Britain yesterday that the world ban on British beef would remain in force indefinitely, in spite of the Government's decision to slaughter 100,000 cattle most at risk from "mad cow" disease.

Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, said the Government was going ahead with the £150 million cull — first mooted in July and then suspended in September — because it was the only way to make any progress on lifting the ban. "It is a political fact, not a scientific fact," he told MPs. "If we do not commit ourselves to a selective cull, then we are certain not to see any progress of any kind."

But even before his Commons statement, the European Commission ruled out any swift lifting of the ban, and one senior Conservative predicted that it could last for years.

Franz Fischler, the Farm Commissioner, made clear that Britain must go through all the EU's decision-making hurdles before there could be any softening of the embargo. And Mr Hogg, who will meet fellow farm ministers in Brussels today, admitted that Britain would not secure a timetable. He told MPs that they "should not be under any illusion as to how quickly a selective cull will lead to a resumption of exports of British beef."

Mr Fischler said that he had not been told officially about Britain's decision to cull an extra 100,000 cattle and it was up to the Government to put forward a detailed request to start the machinery agreed at the Florence summit in June. "I don't see any need to depart from what was agreed upon," he said. "I think we need to move forward step by step as agreed."

That means that a British request, probably to ease the ban on grass-fed herds certi-

fied as BSE-free, must pass through various committees including the Standing Veterinary Committee. At best, that could take weeks.

Euro-sceptics were glum about the announcement, seeing it as another U-turn in the face of Brussels pressure. John Townend said: "Many of us just don't trust our European friends and we think they are going to keep this ban going for year after year."

But Sir David Naish, president of the National Farmers' Union, welcomed the announcement, while calling for extra financial help for farmers who would lose a substantial proportion of their herds.

"We are not happy at the idea of many thousands of healthy animals being culled," he said. "But we have long accepted that the Florence agreement had to be honoured by Britain and that this was the only way to start lifting the export ban."

A few farmers could lose up to half or more of their herds under the selective cull. Under the proposals published last July, the Government envisaged paying the market price for culled cattle with extra money for farmers who lose 10 per cent or more of their herds. The Treasury will pick up £90

million of the compensation bill and the EU the rest.

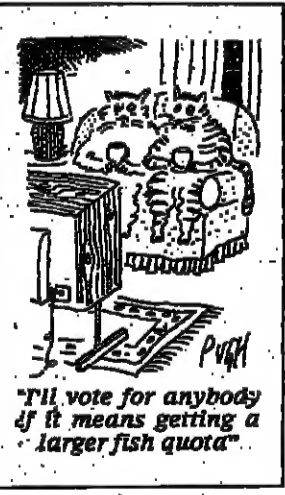
The decision to go ahead with the cull after all was announced as ministers tried to avoid a defeat in last night's Commons vote on fishing, where the result appeared to hinge on the Ulster Unionists. They were pleased by the beef decision but unimpressed by assurances that ministers would seek higher fish quotas for Northern Ireland.

The decision also coincided with the Prime Minister's report on the European summit in Dublin, in which he told MPs that the Community was facing a "moment of truth". It was a delusion to think that Britain could exist outside the EU, but the country under his leadership would have no part of Franco-German plans that would lead to an "embryonic superstate".

He signalled that radical changes proposed by some members would be either blocked or would go ahead without British involvement. The choices over the next few months would determine not only the success and stability of Europe as a whole, but Britain's relationship with it.

Although he criticised those who "peddled the delusion" that Britain could leave the EU, John Major appeared to hint at an arms-length relationship if an inner core of countries went ahead with elements of political union that Britain opposed. "Those who want to integrate further in particular areas should not be frustrated unreasonably although, if they wish to use EU institutions (such as the European Court of Justice), they can only proceed through unanimity. Those who do not must not be forced into unwished-for obligations which build up resentment."

Matthew Parris and BSE about-turn, page 2
Leading article, page 15



"I'll vote for anybody if it means getting a larger fish quota"



Mark Boyden and Princess Zahra: they met in France two years ago and are expected to marry in the summer

Aga Khan's daughter to wed Briton

By Carol Midgley and Susan Bell

PRINCESS Zahra, the only daughter of the Aga Khan, has become engaged to a farmer's son from Dorset, it was announced yesterday.

Mark Boyden, 35, a management consultant who is also involved with his parents' farming business, met the princess through friends two years ago in France. They are expected to marry next summer.

The Aga Khan announced the engagement yesterday in a notice issued by his secretary in Aiglemont, near Chantilly, France. Mr Boyden's mother, Patricia, said: "We are delighted, very happy indeed, but we have been asked to refer all queries to the Aga Khan's office."

Speaking at the family farm in Cheselborne, Dorchester,

from where their business, Boyden Brothers, is run, Mrs Boyden added that she and her husband John knew the princess well. "We don't yet know the date for the wedding though," she said.

Mr Boyden is a former pupil of the now defunct Dartington Hall School, in Dartington, Devon. He studied business administration at Oxford Brookes University, focusing particularly on business ethics and human rights, before becoming a management consultant.

Princess Zahra, 26, the oldest of the Aga Khan and Princess Salimah's three children, has worked for her father, leader of the world's four million Ismaili Muslims and directly descended from the Prophet Mohammed,

since graduating from Harvard University in 1994.

The announcement said she was "actively involved in social development activities, focusing particularly on women's development and the provision of safety nets for the very poor in Africa and Asia."

She and Mr Boyden will divide their time between England and France and the princess will continue to work for her father.

Recently she followed in his footsteps by becoming involved in racehorse ownership, registering her own dark green and brown colours. Her parents divorced last year with an estimated £50 million settlement for her mother, the former model Sally Croker-Poole, 56. Mr Boyden has one older sister, Jo, who is under-

stood to be working as an academic in Oxford.

Princess Zahra has two brothers, Prince Rahim, 25, and Prince Hussain, 22. A family friend was once quoted as saying: "Zahra has easily the nicest personality of the three children and while Rahim will eventually succeed their father she will be a great asset. She has a tremendous sense of humour and is a lot of fun to be with."

Formula 1 in chaos, page 40

Judges urged to quit Freemasons

Judges are facing calls to resign from the Freemasons, or at least publicly state their membership, after fresh evidence on the extent of the "brotherhood" within the judiciary. The information has been gathered by the 500-strong Association of Women Barristers. Page 4

Threat to shares

Halifax Building Society shares could be hit by a FTSE 100 listing delay. Page 21

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Smoking fathers may cause cancer

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

ONE in seven of all childhood cancers may be caused by fathers who smoke, a new study has shown. The more a man smokes, the greater the risk becomes.

Strong evidence of the damaging effects of smoking has come from data gathered more than 40 years ago and re-examined by a team from Birmingham University. It showed a "highly significant" association between fathers who smoked and children who died of cancer, says Dr Tom Sorahan of the university.

ty's Institute of Occupational Health. The assumption is that smoking causes cancer in children by damaging their father's sperm.

"Men smoking less than ten cigarettes a day have a 3 per cent higher chance of fathering a child who dies of cancer," Dr Sorahan said yesterday. "For those smoking between 10 and 20 cigarettes a day, the increased risk is 31 per cent, and it rises to 42 per cent for fathers who smoke more than 20 a day."

Anti-smoking campaigners

seized on the new figures. A spokeswoman for Action on Smoking and Health said: "Women have known for a long time that by smoking during pregnancy they are damaging the health of their unborn babies. Now men will have to accept that by smoking they are not only putting their own health at risk, but also that of their children as well."

The tobacco industry is likely to argue that the increased risk is so small as to be statistically meaningless. Last summer Philip Morris Europe

ran an advertising campaign arguing that passive smoking — the risks of which are of the same order as those found by the new study — is not a proper cause for concern.

Sir Richard Doll of Oxford University, the doyen of smoking studies who first linked smoking to lung cancer, was cautious in interpreting the results. "It's a good study, but the statistics are not all that compelling," he said. "Other studies on the subject have

Continued on page 2, col 5

Sir Laurens, mentor to Prince, dies

Sir Laurens van der Post, the writer, explorer, mystic and a major influence on the Prince of Wales, has died two days after his ninetieth birthday, (Alan Hamilton writes).

The Prince's office said last night that he had been "deeply saddened" by the death of a dear and long-standing friend, Lucia Crichton-Miller. Sir Laurens's daughter, said her father died at his London home on Sunday.

Obituary, page 17

Amis switches publishers in mid-contract for £1m

By Daiya Alberge and Jason Cowley

MARTIN AMIS has fallen out with the publishing house that offered him a record-breaking £500,000 contract less than a year ago. He has signed a four-book deal with his original publisher, Jonathan Cape, an imprint of Random House, thought to be worth considerably more than £1 million.

The deal catapults Amis into the super league of British millionaire novelists headed by Jeffrey Archer, Jackie Collins and Salman Rushdie. He surprised the

literary world yesterday by announcing his split with HarperCollins, even though he is yet to fulfil his promised two-book contract. It was unclear whether he would still have to deliver to HarperCollins a volume of short stories.

The move was orchestrated by Andrew Wylie, the New York agent known in the trade as The Jackal. He has upset many by luring Amis away from his original agency, Peter, Fraser and Dunlop. Sources close to the agency said it was highly unorthodox for an author to break such a contract "especially as the original negotiations surrounding it were so

acrimonious". One observed: "The real victim is HarperCollins. There are many fine nuances at play, involving writers' ego, testosterone and literary envy. Martin never used to be that interested in money. I hear things have changed."

An alternative view was provided by Louis Baum, the editor of *The BookSELLER*. "It may be that because *The Information* did not perform as well as HarperCollins hoped — in other words, sales haven't earned back its advance — the publishing house was unwilling to commit itself to extending itself to such a long contract with Amis."



Amis: four-book deal with Jonathan Cape

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Parents denied choice of schools

BY JOHN O'LEARY
AND DAVID CHARTER

MILLIONS of pounds are being wasted and tens of thousands of parents denied their first choice of school because of inefficiencies in the allocation of school places, government spending watchdogs will disclose today.

A highly critical report by the Audit Commission will say there is a wasteful mismatch between pupils and places, with one in six less than three-quarters full but one in three filled beyond capacity. The commission estimates that more than 300,000 empty places could be removed, releasing cash for other

purposes. The report, *Trading Places*, represents the first systematic examination of one of the main planks of the Government's education policy. The commission says there is little real choice for parents in many areas and popular schools are not expanding to cope with demand. The report concludes: "Local authorities' attempts at intervention and management are hampered — sometimes by their own poor performance, but also by the defects of the national policy framework."

"Tackling the current shortcomings will require effort at both a local and a national level. These efforts could yield both financial savings, ultimately around £100 million."

A survey of ten local authorities found that almost one in five parents did not get their "genuine first preference" state secondary school in September 1995. The number of appeals was found to have increased by 44 per cent in the past three years.

Surplus provision should be removed if a school is less than 75 per cent full, the report says. Parents should be given better information on all schools in their area and schools should be monitored closely so that agencies can intervene before financial problems mount in unpopular schools. The commission makes clear that the market system set up by successive Acts on education has worked against the interests of

parents. It urges the Government to act to mend the "defects" of current policies. It says: "The desired outcomes of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, as well as the satisfaction of parental choice, will not be achieved automatically by the operation of the market alone."

The commission says there are many areas which could be improved and sets out a 14-point plan, with more than half the measures aimed at improving the performance of local authorities. Among these is a call for scrapping sixth forms with fewer than 150 students if local agreements on collaboration and sharing of facilities cannot be reached in the search to cut costs.

The ten local authorities studied in depth for the study were the city councils of Birmingham and Leeds, the boroughs of Doncaster, Kingston-upon-Thames and Southwark, and the counties of Essex, Lancashire, Mid-Glamorgan, Northumberland and Warwickshire.

The report points out that government spending has not matched its much vaunted policy of enabling popular schools to expand. "In most circumstances, the Department for Education's capital allocation procedures do not provide funds for adding capacity to popular schools in England where there are unfilled places in neighbouring schools — even if these are of a different type."

MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

Major turns to government by confusion

In our frenzy over the detail of Tory policy, we are missing something more important: the creative genius of our Prime Minister. By stealth he is abandoning the ancient doctrine of collective Cabinet responsibility.

It is quite refreshing. Other leaders pretend they have a frontbench position on important questions, but John Major hardly bothers. Yesterday, quizzed by Tony Blair on the Government's latest cattle cull, Mr Major repeated what has long been his line: that BSE policy is led by "the science". He murmured something about "changed scientific evidence" on maternal transmission to calves. "The science" had changed, so the policy had changed.

Not many minutes later Douglas Hogg, the Minister of Agriculture, was on his feet, offering his own explanation for the increased cattle slaughter. It had little to do with science, Mr Hogg said. "The real justification for the cull is that unless we do the cull we will not get progress on lifting the ban. That is a political fact, not a scientific fact."

Mr Major says one thing: Mr Blair was vexed about the confusion and used it to some effect in the House yesterday, mocking what he called the "serial incompetence" of the Government. But the chamber was half-empty and the press gallery listless. "Hell," we thought, "this is all such a mess, and anyway it's nearly Christmas." Pencils dropped.

If, in a through-the-looking-glass world, key figures keep contradicting each other, there is only so much mileage to be had from pointing this out. After a while we tire of demonstrating what has already been demonstrated — that different voices are saying different things — and give up. Mr Major just keeps throwing sand in people's eyes until they take their buckets and

spades and quit the beach, leaving him alone with his sandcastle, which was what he wanted all along.

He seemed to be adopting this tactic on a broad front yesterday. Adopting his Mystic Meg voice and speaking in a strangely relaxed near-monotone, he told Euro-sceptic and Euro-phobic side-tiggers (variously) that he would brook no fudging from Europe; that Britain's whole relationship with Europe was in the balance; that it wasn't; and that he absolutely shared the worries of backbench colleague David Wiltshire (Spelthorne) about anti-European feeling.

Ray Whitney (C. Wycombe) is so Europhile that he sounds like a simultaneous translation from French. To Mr Major's delight he commended to him a mysterious "middle way" called "realistic British Europeanism".

Sir Teddy Taylor (C. Southend E) is so rapidly Europhobic that he turns up all but wiping the foam flecks from his mouth. He welcomed the Prime Minister's resolve to have no truck with EU demands. Mr Major agreed this was "essential".

Within minutes of each other, Sir Patrick Cormack (C. Stuffs S) and Edward Leigh (C. Gainsborough & Horncastle) had congratulated him warmly over Europe. Sir Patrick and Mr Leigh do not inhabit the same planet. Either the Prime Minister has two European policies or one of these gentlemen has misunderstood the policy he does have.

In fact they both misunderstood. Mr Major may have a view, but none of us has the least idea what it is. We find ourselves confronted by him as in a canyon we might be confronted by the rock face. The rock keeps its counsel. We hear only strange, mocking echoes of our own opinions.

About-turn on BSE meets EU conditions

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S agreement to carry out a selective cattle cull means that the Government has formally met all the conditions set at the EU summit in Florence in June for easing the ban on British beef.

At Florence the Government undertook to slaughter and destroy up to 147,000 cattle identified as being at particular risk of developing BSE. These were cattle born between 1989 and 1993 and reared on the same infected feed as animals that have died of BSE.

In September, the Cabinet had shelved plans for the cull, citing new scientific evidence that BSE would die out naturally around 2001 and that the slaughter would do little if anything to bring this date nearer. The Government has

now been forced to return to much the same plan it rejected only three months ago. One difference, as Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, told the Commons, is that only about 100,000 cattle will need to be culled because about 50,000 of those targeted in June have already been killed in the separate slaughter of animals over 30 months old.

Some 1.1 million older cattle have been destroyed since early May to reassure consumers that only young beef, the least likely to have been exposed to BSE, is entering the food chain.

Under the 30-month scheme, farmers can keep cows on their farms until the end of their working lives. Under the selective cull, which could affect about 2,000 herds,

any targeted animal will be removed immediately. The selective cull is expected to cost about £150 million gross, with a net cost to the Treasury of £90 million. That reflects partial funding by the rest of the European Union and savings from having to kill fewer animals than once thought.

The figure comes on top of more than £1 billion already being spent this year on the cull of older cattle and related aid and compensation. However, it is already clear that it will be months before the selective cull begins.

□ About 800 French cattle breeders ransacked Dutch and Irish trucks and burnt cargoes of veal in Paris to back their demands for more European Union aid in coping with the BSE crisis.



Victoria Lowther, who died after a swift decline in health over four months

CJD blamed for girl's death

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

A YOUNG woman is thought to be the latest person to have died from the new variant strain of CJD blamed on eating BSE-infected meat, especially beefburgers.

Victoria Lowther, 19, the daughter of a hotel owner in Carlisle, Cumbria, died last month in a hospice four months after first complaining of repeated headaches. From a bright, pretty teenager heading for university, she quickly degenerated into an invalid,

bound to a wheelchair and dependent on carers.

The catastrophic decline in her health is consistent with the symptoms of variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, which has younger people with devastating results. The Department of Health said last night that there were 14 confirmed cases of the variant strain, which government scientists have linked to "mad cow" disease. Two of the confirmed cases are still alive.

Every new case raises fears of an epidemic among young-

sters who ate cheap beef products in the late 1980s. Miss Lowther had no connection with cattle or meat production.

At first she was treated at the neurology unit of the Royal Victoria Hospital in Newcastle upon Tyne. Doctors allowed her to go home after they told her there was nothing more they could do for her.

Ian Morton, the coroner for North-East Cumbria, said he was satisfied that CJD was the cause of Miss Lowther's illness. He has decided not to hold an inquest into her death.

UK public borrowing 'too high for Emu'

BY JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS
CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S public borrowing is expected to be too high to qualify for membership of the European single currency, even if it decided that it wanted to join, according to an influential think-tank.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development said in its latest economic outlook that, on the European definition of public borrowing, Britain's deficit next year is likely to amount to 3.7 per cent of gross domestic product. This is above the 3 per cent limit laid down in the Maastricht Treaty.

Borrowing is forecast to fall to about the required 3 per cent level by 1998 but 1997 is the test year which will count when the euro "ins" and "outs" are decided.

Val Koromay, the OECD's deputy director of the economic outlook, said the latest public borrowing projections had been made before last month's Budget but that the Chancellor's package of measures changed the figures only marginally. He said Britain's deficit was destined to be a "substantial way above" the Maastricht level.

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, welcomed the report, which was optimistic on the outlook for growth, inflation and unemployment, but he did not respond to the OECD's pessimism on the public finances.

Germany may also miss the deficit limit, albeit by a smaller margin, according to the latest forecast by the Ifo economic institute in Munich. Ifo said it expects the German deficit to be 3.2 per cent of GDP in 1997.

The OECD's judgment on Britain's public finances is far less upbeat than the Chancellor's view at Budget time when he said that it was a "lucky coincidence" that Britain's deficit would come down to within the Maastricht Treaty limits on cue in 1997.

Male smokers should quit before conception

MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomas Stuttard

THE report on the analysis of the lifestyle of the families of children who develop cancer will make worrying reading for parents, particularly fathers. It has always been reassuring, as a doctor, to be able to explain to parents that the cause of such cancers is usually unknown, but is thought to be no fault of their own. These bland words are now to be denied us when comforting a father who smokes, as it may be that he disastrously damaged the genetic material in his own sperm, thereby leading to the malignancy.

Sperm are more easily influenced by toxins than is usually supposed. Despite their ability to swim so far, and against such odds, they are very fragile. Scientists have detected an increased number of abnormal forms, deterioration in numbers, less motility and less purposeful movement in the sperm of men who drink alcohol to excess and, which has also been reported, in those who smoke cannabis.

It may be that, in both these instances, tobacco smoked while drinking, or with hashish, is of greater importance than has hitherto been realised. Any effect on a baby of

these substances when taken by the mother is presumably the result of an adverse effect on the developing foetus, whereas when abnormalities are the result of the lifestyle of the male the influence is on the genetic structure of the sperm.

Sperm are constantly being manufactured and the process is continuous, whereas a woman is born with her full complement of ova; therefore, the good news is that if the man stops smoking some months before conception there is every likelihood that his fertilising sperm will be as healthy as those of his non-smoking neighbour.

It is suggested that the effect of tobacco smoking on spermatogenesis may be the result of free radicals, those sinister, marauding, unattached electrons which can be so damaging to a wide variety of human

tissues. Greater consumption well before pregnancy is contemplated of anti-oxidants — vitamins C and E — and the carotenoids, as well as folic acid, which neutralise the free radicals, is a wise precaution, whether the parents are smokers or not.

The dangers to young children of having parents who smoke are already well documented. The mother who smokes during pregnancy is reported to have smaller, less intelligent babies, with all the attendant risks. If either partner continues to smoke after delivery, the children are more likely to have asthma, upper respiratory tract infections and to die from cot death. To these potential dangers will now have to be added childhood cancer, if the father has not given up his cigarettes several months before conception.

Sperm 'may cause cancer'

Continued from page 1 reached different conclusions.

The new figures are drawn from the Oxford Survey of Childhood Cancers, which was started in the 1950s by Dr Alice Stewart. Now aged 90, she is a co-author of the new study, published in the *British Journal of Cancer*.

Dr Stewart set out to interview the parents of every child in England, Scotland and Wales who died of cancer under the age of 16. The study relates to 1,952 cancer deaths in the years 1953-55, and is based on interviews with the parents of 83.6 per cent of them. The results were compared with a matched group of parents of healthy children.

The study shows that a mother's smoking habits do not influence their children's risk of getting cancer, but that

a father's do. For a wide range of cancers, including leukaemia, neuroblastoma and bone cancer, the risks are increased.

The relationship holds good even when possible confounding factors such as class, age, and exposure of the mother to X-rays during pregnancy are taken into account, Dr Sorahan said.

"Smoking is already believed to alter the DNA of some sperm and our new findings suggest that it could lead to cancer-causing mutations," he said.

Whether today's milder cigarettes are having as great an effect as those smoked in the 1950s is uncertain.

Nor is it clear how soon a man would have to give up smoking to protect a future child.

"The risk that a child will die of cancer is quite small,"

Dr Sorahan said, "and smoking increases that risk by 20-30 per cent."

Professor Richard Peto of Oxford University said that smokers spend their lives bathed in chemicals capable of causing genetic changes, so it would not be surprising if such chemicals damaged sperm.

Professor Gordon McVie, Director General of the Cancer Research Campaign, said: "We already know that the majority of childhood cancers are caused by factors which occur prior to birth and it seems plausible that paternal smoking could be one of them."

The *British Journal of Cancer* also reports that breathing a mixture of oxygen and carbon dioxide can increase the potency of anti-cancer drugs.

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Hospital gave prostate drug to woman with cramp



Graham: seeking inquiry into hospital's mistake

By Emma Wilkins
A PREGNANT woman who was admitted to hospital suffering stomach cramps was given a drug meant for men suffering prostate problems, it emerged yesterday. Pamela Graham, who is eight weeks pregnant, will have to wait until her baby is born to discover if it has suffered any damage.

Mrs Graham, an auxiliary community nurse from Redruth, Cornwall, called for an inquiry after Treliske Hospital apologised for the mistake. "My major concern is for my baby. I am not interested in any compensation for myself, but these mistakes should not occur," Mrs Graham said.

When she was admitted to the hospital earlier this month, Mrs Graham was initially given a bed in the men's section of a mixed ward before staff moved her next to other women.

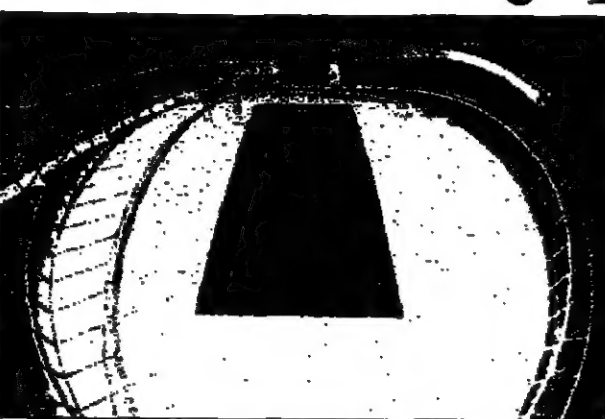
Mrs Graham, who trained at the hospital five years ago, asked to be prescribed folic acid — a recommended supplement she had been taking for her baby's wellbeing. But she was given a tablet of Tamsulosin, a drug designed to alleviate prostate problems by relaxing the neck of the bladder. Mrs Graham took one tablet and was given six more to take over the week but a staff nurse realised that a mistake had been made before she took any.

Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust, which runs Treliske Hospital, admitted the error and apologised. It is the latest in a series of blunders at the hospital, where a baby was sent home last year with a hypodermic needle in his back.

Mrs Graham has been told it is unlikely that her baby will be harmed but doctors cannot be sure until after the birth in August. She said: "Initially I was extremely angry but very quickly this turned into absolute disbelief. I am hoping that an inquiry will not only reinstate confidence in Treliske Hospital but will also prevent any further problems occurring in the future."

Wembley beats rivals to £100m lottery prize

By Marcus Binney
THE Sports Council will announce today that London has won the greatest lottery prize of all, the £180 million project for a new national football and athletics stadium at Wembley.



Norman Foster plans to turn the stadium through 90 degrees, so the twin towers are behind one goal



The winning design by Sir Norman Foster spins the existing pitch through 90 degrees so that the famous twin towers loom behind the northern goalmouth. The change involves moving the towers slightly further down Olympic Way.

The lottery grant is likely to be more than £100 million. The Sports Council has spent months considering competing bids from Wembley and Manchester, but after the Football Association, the Football League and the FA Premier League came out in favour of Wembley, the choice of London was not seriously in doubt.

The Foster stadium bowl is swept up dramatically along the sides to create an undulating silhouette, with a wide translucent roof, complementing the white towers surviving from the 1924 Empire Exhibition. The outer skin of the stadium will be a colourful wall of constantly moving laser images, projected from within, and concealing the ugly underside of the seats, which has turned many stadiums into architectural eyesores.

The design will be refined over the next six months with a view to submitting a detailed application to the Sports Council's lottery board. If the final go-ahead is given in the summer, work can begin on the site in June 1998, with completion by January 2000.

The main issue still to be decided is whether the rebuilt stadium should have a retractable roof. Initially Manchester, which had such a roof as part of its design, cast scorn on Wembley's lack of one.

In response Sir Norman and the engineers Ove Arup have designed "a roof" which allows covers to glide out over the pitch along tension cables, attached to a compression ring around the crown of the stadium. The transparent roof panels would be parked just under the fixed roof, above the seating, and drawn out over the field by a pulley system.

The process would take approximately 15 minutes. For athletics, the panels could be opened out further at the end, also allowing maximum sunlight from the south on to the grass pitch.

Bishop refuses to preach in cathedral at Christmas

By Russell Jenkins
THE Bishop of Lincoln is refusing to set foot inside his cathedral this Christmas in protest at the continuing feud between the dean and sub-dean.



Bishop Hardy: boycott is gesture of despair

The Right Rev Robert Hardy traditionally joins the carol singers on Christmas Eve and preaches from the pulpit on Christmas Day. However, he has made it clear through his office that he cannot be seen alongside the Dean of Lincoln, the Very Rev Brandon Jackson, and the Sub-dean, Canon Rex Davis.

Bomb pair jailed for 20 years

By Stewart Tindler
TWO Palestinian science graduates who used their education to build bombs were jailed for 20 years each at the Old Bailey yesterday for plotting to blow up the Israeli Embassy and a Jewish charity.

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We know it's difficult buying Christmas presents for men. After all, how many pairs of socks can one man wear?

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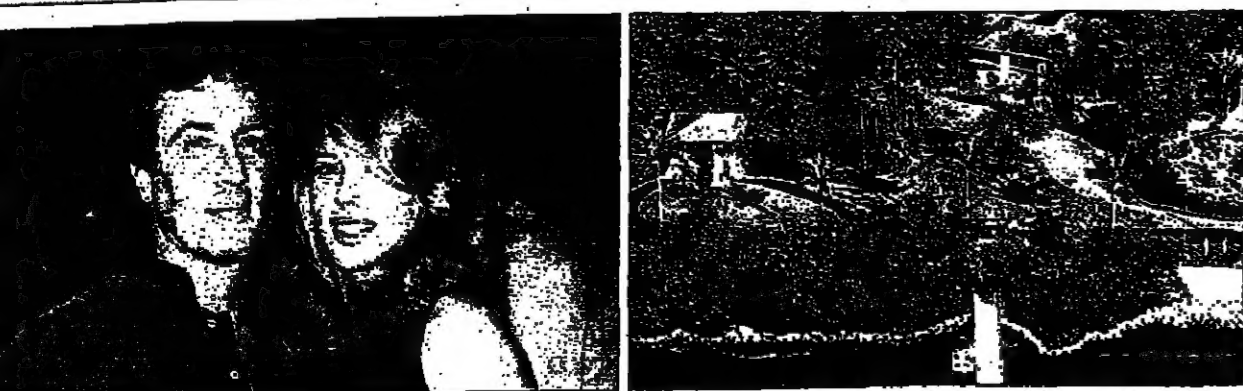
We're pretty sure he'll appreciate it, though.

After all, it's the best shaver we've ever made. Its unique pivoting head is specifically designed to follow the contours of the face. The result is our closest shave yet.

And, with models ranging from £49.99 to £119.99, it should be easy enough to find one that suits him.

Of course, you could play safe and get him another pair of socks this year.

But just try returning them to the shop after 90 days' use and see what reaction you get.



Stallone and Jennifer Flavin, mother of his baby daughter Sophia, and the Miami home that they will leave

Rambo flees Miami vice for London

By Damian Whitworth
SYLVESTER STALLONE, the muscled hard man of Hollywood action films, is to flee America for a new life in London. He said he was not prepared to bring up his daughter, now three months old, in crime-ridden Miami.

"My home town, Miami, is beautiful — but it has become extremely dangerous. I want my daughter to be safe and to have the best possible education and she just won't get that in the States. Miami has one of the worst education records in America. The European system seems to be so far ahead. A private education in Britain would give her the best opportunities in the best surroundings. I'm not going to wait until she's older. We'll move to London soon."

The Rambo star, who joins a cross-Atlantic drift of other American actors, such as Tom Cruise, often visits Wentworth Golf Club in Surrey when he is in Britain. Stallone, 50, is due to give evidence soon in the trial of one of his former security guards for the attempted murder of another guard in the grounds of his home. "I have the best security money can buy but it's still not enough. I just don't want my family exposed to those kind of dangers. I know there's crime everywhere but I want to go somewhere where the risks are less," he told The Sun.

Stallone said he would move when Sophia, his daughter by Jennifer Flavin, 28, has fully recovered from surgery for a hole in the heart.

Shot man's family 'stuck for motive'

By Emma Wilkins

THE son of a businessman who was shot dead outside the family home said yesterday that his father was a "wonderful, caring and hard-working" man.

Police believe Richard Watson, 54, a computer consultant with business interests in eastern Europe, may have been the victim of a contract killing. However, his son Julian, 28, who worked for his father's company, said the family could find no possible motive for the murder.

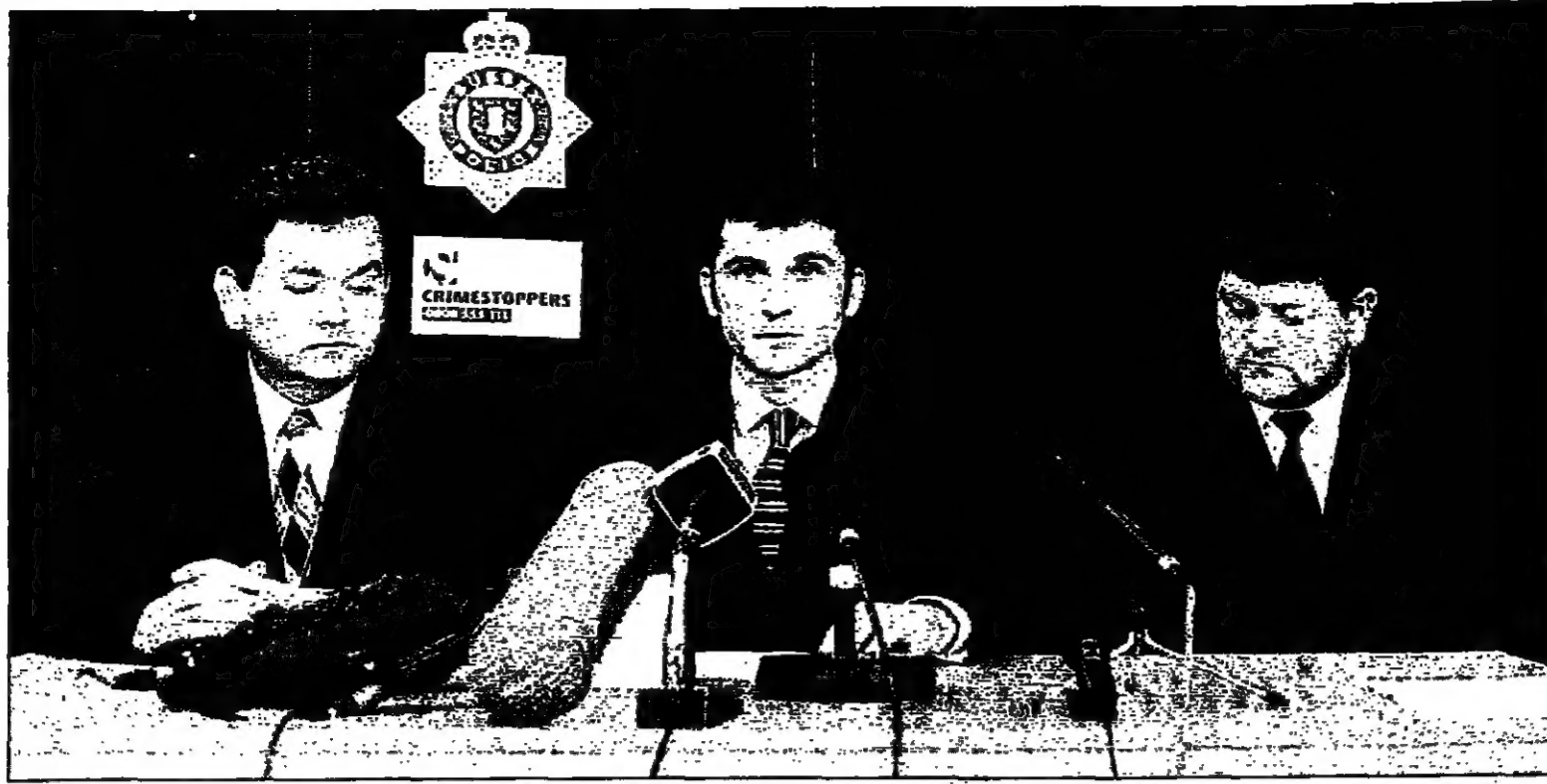
Mr Watson said his father had been in a cheerful mood hours before he was shot in the chest in the driveway of the family's farmhouse in East Oxley, near West Sussex, last week. "He seemed very happy," he said.

"The family have no idea why Dad was murdered. We appeal to anybody who has any information about this murder to contact the police. Somebody, somewhere, must know something."

Police believe Detective Superintendent Paul Westwood, who is leading the inquiry, said Mr Watson's business and financial affairs were being investigated. He was a director of one company which went into liquidation, while another was dissolved. Weeks before he was killed, he was attacked with a stun gun by two men wearing balaclavas.

"Although we have no definite information about a motive, it would be foolish to disregard any possibility, including the possibility this was a professional hit," Mr Westwood said.

Julian Watson, flanked by detectives, speaking about his father, who seemed "very happy" shortly before he was shot dead at his home



Julian Watson, flanked by detectives, speaking about his father, who seemed "very happy" shortly before he was shot dead at his home

More than 30 in the judiciary are members of brotherhood, women barristers tell MPs

Judges 'should resign as Masons or admit status'

By Frances Gibb and Bill Frost

JUDGES are facing calls to resign from the Freemasons, or at least publicly state their membership, after evidence to MPs on the extent of the "brotherhood" within the judiciary.

More than 30 judges have been identified from those listed as high-ranking or "Grand" officers in the latest Masonic Year Book (1996-97). They include Lord Justice Millett, one of the top Chancery judges in the Court of Appeal, and the High Court judges Mr Justice Chadwick and Mr Justice Toulson.

Retired judges include a law lord, Lord Templeman, and the former Court of Appeal judges, Sir John Balcombe and Sir Edward Rieupey, and the former High Court judge Sir Maurice Drake. His Honour Lawrence Verney, QC, the Recorder of London, and His Honour Alan King-Hamilton, QC, (retired), are also both listed in the yearbook.

Sir Frederick Crawford,

who has been appointed chairman of the new body to review miscarriages of justice — the Criminal Cases Review Authority — is also a senior Freemason.

The Association of Women Barristers, which has compiled the information, is recommending to the Commons Home Affairs Committee that anyone appointed a judge be required to resign membership of the Freemasonry or at least disclose it publicly. The MPs start their inquiry into Freemasonry in the police and judiciary tomorrow, under Sir Ivan Lawrence, QC, MP.

Josephine Hayes, chair of the association, said there were probably far more judges who were Freemasons than those identified, particularly at the lower levels, but only high-ranking officers were named in the 1996-97 handbook. It was difficult to obtain information, she said.

"We think that in principle



Lord Justice Millett: listed as Freemason

that for judges to be Freemasons is damaging and detrimental to public confidence in the impartiality of the judiciary and also to the system of judicial appointment and appointment to silk."

There was some anecdotal evidence of public concern, she added. Clients had on occa-

sion expressed worries — albeit unjustified — that a judge hearing their case might be a Freemason when they knew their opponent also to be one.

Second, women barristers have concerns that because the system of appointment to the judiciary depended on "secret soundings", the network afforded by Freemasonry gave members a means through which they could meet senior judges which was not open to women candidates. Such contacts were all the more important now that the practicing Bar had grown to more than 8,000 and judges no longer knew candidates personally.

The association cites one anonymous instance where a person had applied, unsuccessfully, to be a Queen's Counsel, and then on becoming a Freemason, was successful. Ms Hayes added: "We think that secret soundings are wrong anyway — but Freemasonry is just one more factor which enables members to meet and mix with senior

BROTHERS IN LAW

Judges, either sitting or retired who are listed in the 1996/97 Masonic Year Book include:

□ (Among the officers of the Supreme Grand Chapter of Royal Arch-Masons of England) Judge John Lloyd Sessions (grand registrar); and His Honour Judge Michael Bradley Goodman (first assistant grand sejourner).

□ (On the panel of the Freemasons' Commission for Appeals Courts) Sir Edward Rieupey, the retired Court of Appeal judge; Sir Maurice Drake, the retired High Court judge; Lord Justice Millett, a Court of Appeal judge, Mr Justice

Chadwick, the High Court judge and His Honour Sir William Stubb, QC.

□ (On the procedure committee): Sir John Balcombe, retired Court of Appeal judge.

□ Other listed members are: His Honour Aunty-Davies, QC; Judge Gerald Coles, QC; Judge Peter Copley; Judge Brian Galpin; His Honour Alan Garbutt; Judge Michael Goodman; His Honour John E. Jones; His Honour Alexander Karmel, QC; His Honour King-Hamilton, QC; Judge Reginald Lockett; District Judge Seymour Samuels; Sir Christopher Slade (retired Court of Appeal judge); Judge Peter Slot; Judge David Smith; Sir John Stocker (retired Court of Appeal judge).

judges and members of the Bar in a way denied to non-members, and offer the loyalty pledges they allegedly give each other. Since women are prohibited from becoming full members — at least of all the mainstream lodges — then it is in principle discriminatory.

The association points out that there are a significant number of Masons' lodges for lawyers. The value of lodge membership was all the greater, Ms Hayes added, now that increasing numbers of cases were heard by senior Queen's Counsel sitting part-time as deputy High Court judges.

Chief constables have called on officers and civilian staff openly to register their position in the Freemasonry. The Association of Chief Police Officers has also urged the Home Office to legislate for officers to register their membership of any organisation that demands a bond of loyalty.

The Lord Chancellor's Department said yesterday that would-be judges were not asked about membership of the Freemasonry. A spokesman said: "The Lord Chancellor believes as a matter of principle that people should

be free to join any lawful organisation, including Freemasonry, if they wish to. They have to swear the judicial oath" [to "do right to all manner of people after the laws and usages of this realm without fear or favour, affection or ill will"] and having done that, he feels there is no conflict of interest."

The Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, told MPs during a previous inquiry into judicial appointments that he had asked senior officials in his department if they were Freemasons and they had said they were not.

Two jailed for attack on 88-year-old widow

By Tim Jones

TWO men who attacked an 88-year-old widow who survived a Nazi slave labour camp were jailed yesterday. A jury at Derby Crown Court was told that Lakwinder Singh Sohal had boasted that he planned to pay for a relative's wedding by targeting a wealthy widow and raping her during a robbery.

His victim was Parvina Honczaruk, who had been seen by Sohal and his friend, Madam Lal Dass, drawing her pension and £4,000 life savings from her local post office at Peartree, Derby. She had intended to give most of the money to her church to care for less fortunate people.

Sohal, 34, who denied the charges, was convicted of indecent assault, robbery and two charges of grievous bodily harm. Dass, 45, who also pleaded not guilty, was convicted of grievous bodily harm and robbery. Sohal was jailed for 18 years and Dass for ten.

Judge Brian Appleby, QC, said that, for brutal and sadistic behaviour, it was the worst case he had encountered since joining the Bar in 1953. "Mrs Honczaruk was a gentle,

nice lady who found pleasure and comfort in her house and possessions, companionship in her church," he said.

"That day she had drawn out her savings, a large part of which she was to give to the church to care for those she considered more needy than herself. Then you broke in and subjected her to an assault so brutal and sadistic as it is possible to imagine."

"So battered and bleeding was she that she couldn't defend herself though she tried. You left her when she might have bled to death, taking with you the few possessions which gave her pleasure. You have destroyed that lady's life."

The court was told that Mrs Honczaruk, underwent surgery after the attack, but had lost the will to live and had expressed the wish to die.

During the hearing she had suffered, one of Mrs Honczaruk's teeth had snapped off and lodged in her throat and one of her ears was almost ripped off. She had bruising to her face, neck, shoulder, chest, arms, hands, fingers and throat and three of

her ribs were broken. She also suffered massive internal bleeding and ruptures to her spleen and gastric artery and was in hospital for four months.

After the case, Detective Inspector Jack Russell, of Derbyshire Police, said at one stage he feared he would be conducting a murder inquiry. He said: "She nearly died. It was an horrendous attack."

In 1943, Mrs Honczaruk, who speaks little English, was forcibly taken by the Germans from her parents in Minsk to work in a munitions factory. Before then, her parents had offended Stalin and been sent to a prison in Siberia. After the war she was held in a refugee camp in Cambridge-shire before meeting her husband, Hregori, a tutor for Ukrainian immigrants, and living with him in Derby until his death in 1971.

Ivan Fedorynsyn, of the Ukrainian Elderly Day Care Centre in Derby, said: "After the attack she told me she had lived through the hell of the Communists and the Nazis and was still alive because God protected her."

Why some killer whales prefer fish

By Nick Nuttall

KILLER whales do not always deserve their blood-thirsty reputation, say scientists. Many orcas are happy to keep documentary film-makers happy by launching themselves onto beaches to match seals and tear them limb from limb. But others dine exclusively on fish.

The findings, disclosed at a meeting yesterday of the British Ecological Society at Durham University, have come from studies of killer whales off northwest America.

Dr Rus Hoelzel, based at Durham University's department of biological sciences, said yesterday: "Killer whales live in social groups called pods. We have found that some feed on marine mammals. But in these same waters others feed on just fish.



Attempts are made to move a beached killer whale

They follow salmon stocks." Genetic studies showed that there were differences between the meat and fish-eating killer whales. "Although they are living in the same place, they are as different as if you compared geographically isolated popula-

tions, like ones in Argentina with those in Iceland."

Dr Hoelzel said feeding habits had probably evolved to ensure there was enough food and to reduce the chances of the same whales all hunting the same food source. "My feeling is that this

London's 2000 show gets £4m backing

Trafalgar Square in London will be the setting for a two-week late evening spectacular to mark the millennium. The £40 million project will see the square turned into a stage for a multimedia show.

Exact details are being kept secret until the new year, but the project has so impressed the Government that it is contributing £4 million. The bulk will go towards training 9,000 young people in the wide range of media skills needed to put on the show and will lead to the creation of 4,000 behind-the-scenes jobs.

Green award

John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, announced a £12 million award for a scheme to expand London's "green industry" and cut the volume of waste by 40 per cent over the next decade. The scheme would make the city the recycling capital of the world, he said.

Greene archive

An archive of books, letters and film scripts by Graham Greene was sold for £255,219 at Sotheby's in London. The top lot was extensive correspondence with the Indian writer R.K. Narayan, which made £23,000. Correspondence with Evelyn Waugh fetched £20,700.

Child drinkers

Two hundred children were detained by Cleveland police during an operation to curb under-age drinking in Stockton-on-Tees. A group of 80 were found drinking on a school playing field. The alcohol was poured away and many faced a dressing-down in front of their parents.

Betts jury out

The jury trying a student for his part in supplying the Ecstasy tablet that killed Leah Betts will resume its deliberations today after failing to reach a verdict last night. Steven Packman, 18, of Laidon, Essex, has denied at Norwich Crown Court any part in the supply of the drug.

'Needless' deaths

Hundreds of travellers die needlessly every year because airline safety procedures are inadequate. More than a third of the 1,500 people who die annually in air accidents should have survived, the European Transport Safety Council said. Deaths rose by 70 per cent this year.

Taste of success

Britain is the centre of the gastronomic world, producing better food than France or Italy, according to Jean Conill, World President of the Epicurean World Master Chefs Society. The rise of young independent chefs, such as Marco Pierre White, and high demand were key factors.

Record spot

The film *101 Dalmatians* broke seasonal British box office records in its first weekend, distributors said. The live action remake of Disney's animation classic took £24 million in three days, the biggest December opening in British cinema history, Buena Vista International said.

Fiennes foiled

Sir Ranulph Fiennes, who was forced to abandon his attempt to become the first man to walk solo across the Antarctic because of kidney stone problems, will not resume his expedition. Sir Ranulph, 52, said last night that insurers would not allow him to continue his quest.

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1164-1165, 1166-1167, 1168-1169, 1170-1171, 1172-1173, 1174-1175, 1176-1177, 1178-1179, 1180-1181, 1182-1183, 1184-1185, 1186-1187, 1188-1189, 1190-1191, 1192-1193, 1194-1195, 1196-1197, 1198-1199, 1200-1201, 1202-1203, 1204-1205, 1206-1207, 1208-1209, 1210-1211, 1212-1213, 1214-1215, 1216-1217, 1218-1219, 1220-1221, 1222-1223, 1224-1225, 1226-1227, 1228-1229, 1230-1231, 1232-1233, 1234-1235, 1236-1237, 1238-1239, 1240-1241, 1242-1243, 1

Identity disc helps experts to identify first of 27 Royal Fusiliers killed in the second battle of Arras

Exhumed soldiers are to be reburied in France

FROM BEN MACINTYRE
IN MONCHY-LE-FRÉUX

THE remains of 27 British soldiers killed in the First World War and discovered recently in northern France are to be reburied there.

Forensic experts and military historians were yesterday working to put names to the soldiers, whose makeshift cemetery was discovered on a former battlefield at the edge of an industrial park outside the northern town of Arras.

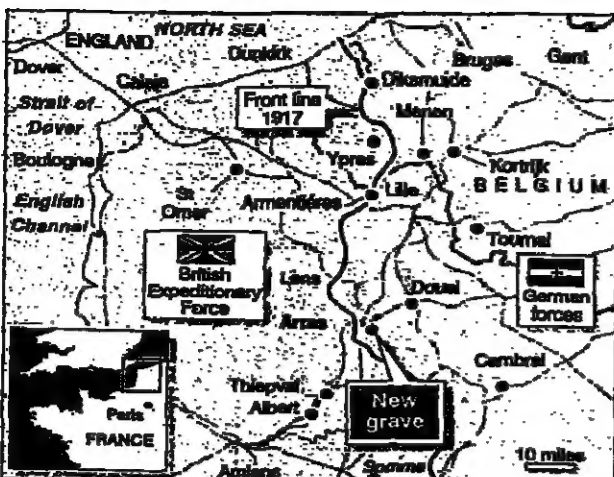
Beverly Webb, a spokeswoman for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, said: "Whether we are successful or not in identifying them, the men will be reburied in a war cemetery in France." She added: "The nearest would be at Arras, but we want to keep the men together and the problem would be whether there are 27 plots there."

Duncan Thomas, exhumation officer at the commission, believes he has identified one of the Royal Fusiliers, killed in the second battle of Arras in April 1917, from a metal identity disc found at the site.

While farmers in northern France periodically unearth the remains of First World War soldiers, most of the large burial sites have been identified. The latest discovery is the largest since the commission uncovered the remains of 51 British soldiers on the Somme battlefield in 1982.

The Monchy site, uncovered by construction workers on Friday, is a sea of mud. It is on a flat strip of land between a new autoroute and the high-speed rail link to Paris. Eurostar trains carrying passengers from London pass a few yards away.

The skeletons — "in a remarkably good state of preservation", according to Michael Johnson, director of the war graves commission in France — have been taken to the mortuary at Arras, where researchers are removing the mud from them retrieved at the site in the search for clues.



The objects are the commonplace but moving debris of war: a broken pipe, a live round, a tanner (zipper), a belt buckle, a tunic button and the epaulettes tag from the 13th Battalion Royal Fusiliers.

As the archaeological evidence and regimental records are pieced together, a clearer picture is emerging of the soldiers' possible fate. They are only a tiny handful of the 35,000 unknown dead who perished at Arras alone.

The identified soldier, whose name has not been released, was a private in the fusiliers killed on April 11, 1917, during some of the bloodiest fighting of the war. The day after his death, *The Times* talked of "smart" and "stiff" fighting and described the German counter assault as "probably no more than a local attempt to check our advance... and will not succeed even in that more than temporarily at most".

Evidence from the Monchy site paints a very different picture, of carnage and chaos and a cemetery barely deserving the name, thrown together in the heat of battle as British and German troops fought over the village. The 27 men were buried without coffins, fully clothed, wearing their boots and many still carrying ammunition pouches. Some were buried in shell holes, while others were laid below a few inches of earth.

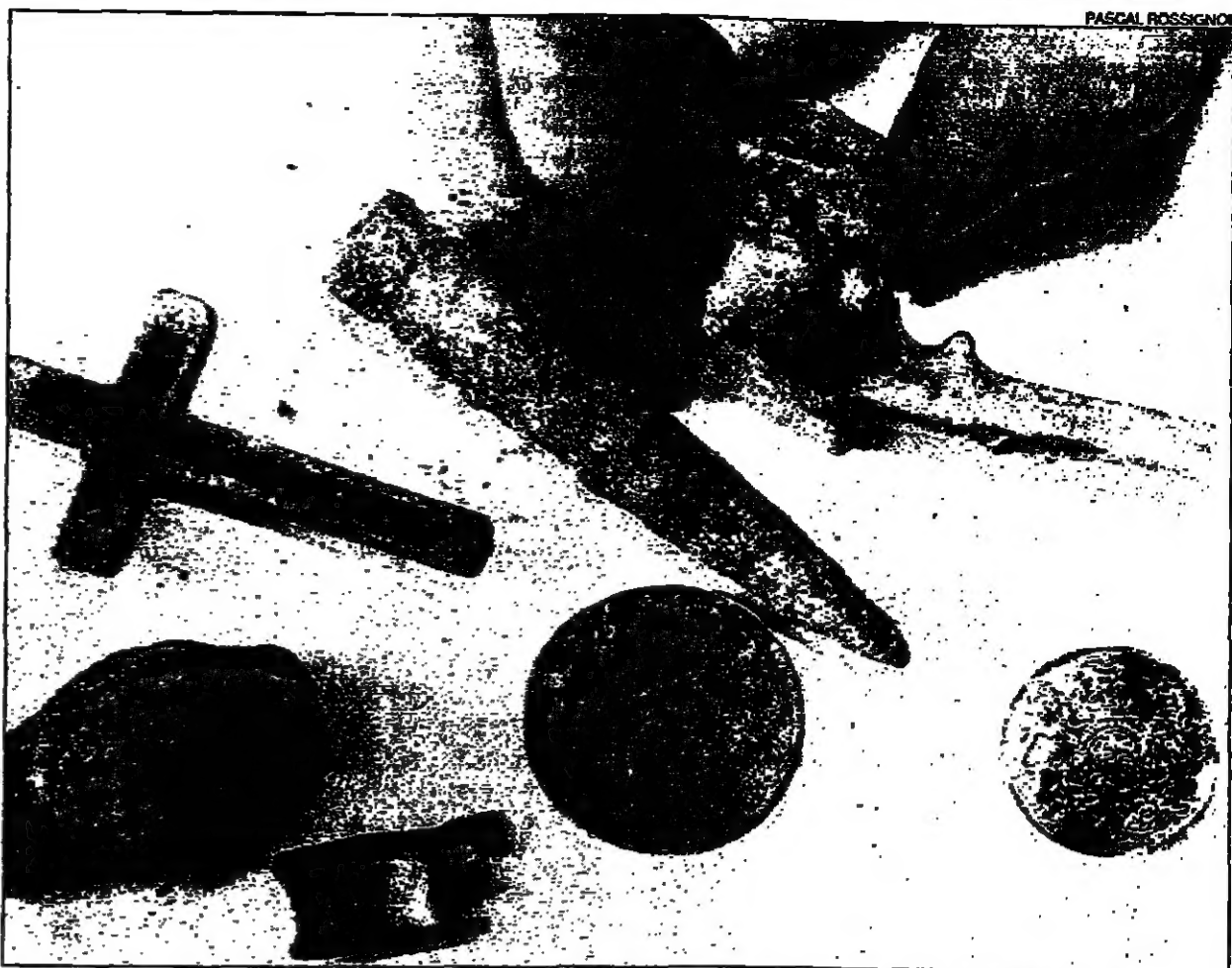
The remains of six soldiers at one end of the site had been previously disturbed, apparently by an exploding shell. However, most of the skeletons are intact, which may indicate that they were casualties wounded in battle who died later in a field hospital near by. Alternatively, Mr Johnson said, they may have been cut down at the same

remnants are so badly decayed that positive identification may be impossible. "This won't tell us anything," Mr Thomas said, holding up a crumbling identity disc.

The commission has placed the names of the 17 million killed in two world wars on a computer database, but identifying those from the newly found grave will be a painstaking detective job. "This might have been an ad-hoc cemetery, ordered by an officer who was later killed, so there would be no record," Mr Johnson said.

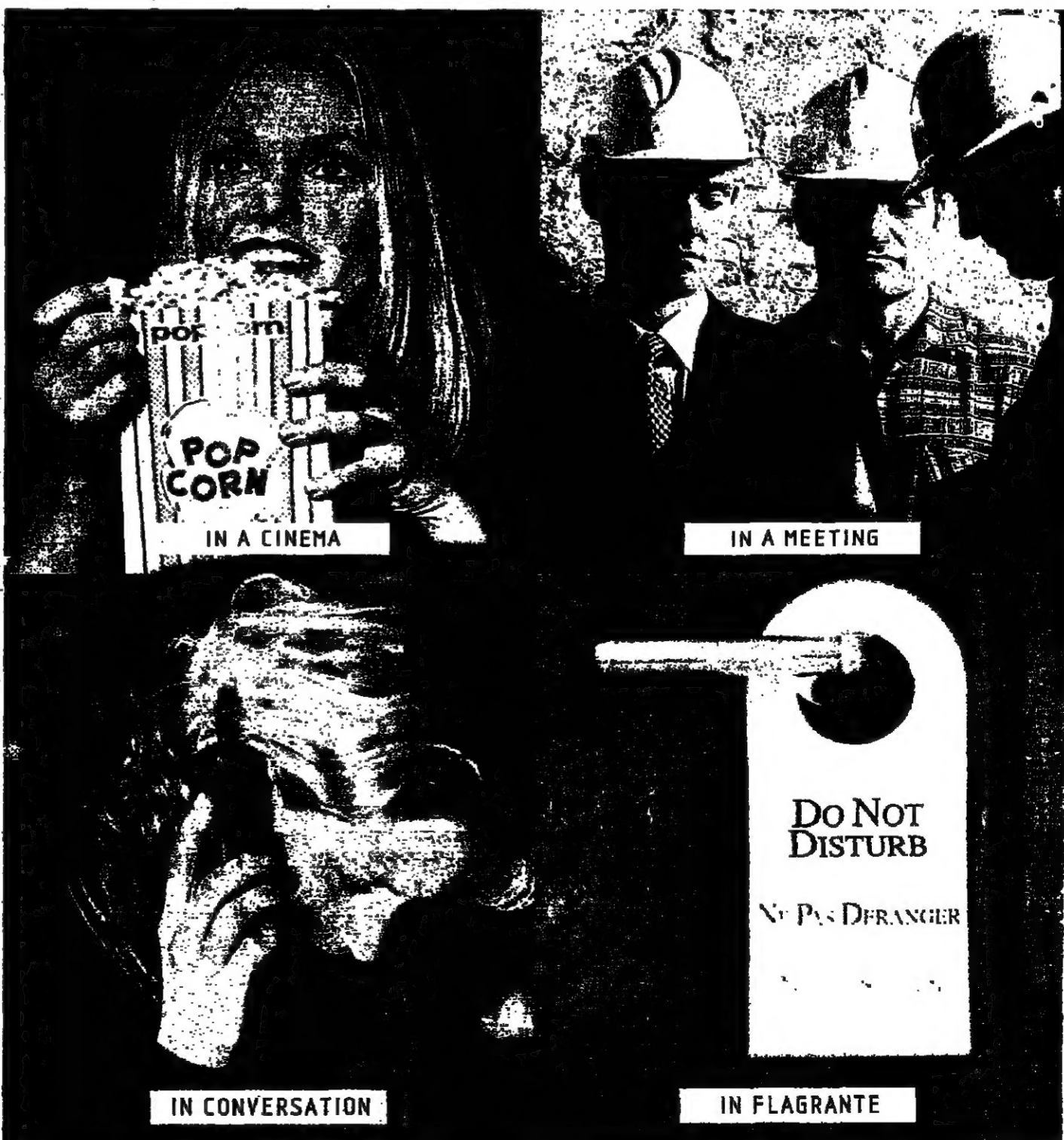
If and when some of the remains are formally identified, the commission will inform the Ministry of Defence, which will then set about attempting to track down relatives.

Tomorrow, the earth movers will return to the site, which is destined to disappear under the sprawling industrial suburbs of Arras. Nevertheless, it will forever be associated with 27 men who died fighting for their country.



Some of the objects from the burial site. Not all soldiers had been issued with metal identity discs by 1917

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Euro rowdies force Sega to kill the queue

By ROBIN YOUNG

THE unspeakable behaviour of continental Europeans has deprived queue-loving Britons of another opportunity to stand in line. The relaunch of a Japanese theme park in central London revealed that the complete rethink of a concept that worked perfectly well in Tokyo was forced by the unwillingness of a range of European visitors to stand one behind the other and await their turn.

The £45 million Segaworld leisure complex in the Trocadero at Piccadilly Circus lowered its general admission price from £12 to £2 and simultaneously introduced individual charges from 50p to £3 for the rides and games.

In the 11 weeks since Segaworld's launch, the managers had found that those who had paid £12 admission formed huge and often unruly queues, at the most popular attractions. Instead of being a centre of fun and innocent pleasure for all the family, Segaworld quickly degenerated into a bearpit of queue-jumping, arguments and, on occasion, brawling.

Back home in Tokyo, Sega has no such problems with its sister attraction, Joypolis. Nick Leslau, chief executive of the Trocadero, said: "The Japanese are terribly polite. If you ask them to stay in a queue, they will."

The trouble at Segaworld was not caused by the Brits, Mr Leslau politely hinted. "It is the Europeans, who are more aggressive and impatient. The problem was that demand for some of the rides was so high that the queues were an hour or more long. Customers did not like that and they said so."

An entirely unscientific survey in central London yesterday showed that the most reluctant queuers were hard-

elbowed Germans. They who attempt to bore their way toward their goal using their arms like screwdriver flanges. In second place come Italians, whose chosen technique is to snarl forward from vantage points near, but not in, the head of the queue, and then to adopt expressions of outraged innocence when accused of not waiting their turn.

Newcomers with rough and ready tactics to beware include Russians and other newly enriched Slavs. After years spent queuing for everything, they now favour a head-down, bullish charge for the front, somewhat like the tanks which their masters used to keep them in order.

Old-fashioned Londoners, though, still delight in queues. "I gave up shopping in Tesco," said Ada Cullen, 78, of Poplar, east London, "when they introduced their silly one-in-front policy, trying to abolish the queues. Queuing is the biggest social occasion of my week. You meet new people, get to hear and see what they are buying and pick up the gossip and the news. Queuing is great."

Two years ago London Transport abandoned a by-law requiring passengers to form orderly queues no more than two abreast. That was not because they had given up hope of keeping order in bus queues, but because so far as anyone could remember no prosecution had ever been brought under the provision.

"It was introduced in 1938 and came into effect in 1939," a spokesman said, "but the need for it to control throngs leaving football matches and such, was overtaken by the war. Then the patient British public got so much into the habit of queuing for everything that the bylaw was never needed."

Arts sector's £1.7bn matches nuclear industry funding

THE arts sector receives as much government funding as the nuclear electricity industry, employs almost twice as many people as those working in motor manufacturing and, cinemas included, inspires the average family to part with 5 per cent of its weekly budget.

The findings are published today by the independent Policy Studies Institute in a report, *Culture as Commodity? The economics of the arts and built heritage in the UK*, which details how the money goes, and where the money goes.

Although most government

spending comes from the Department of National Heritage, the Ministry of Defence has emerged unexpectedly as a big funder, investing £13 million in military museums and music schools. The Department of the Environment spent £39 million on cultural projects and the Home Office found £700,000 for arts activities in prisons and the probation service.

The report found that about half of the total £1.7 billion funding for the cultural sector came from the Department of National Heritage and the Scottish, Welsh and North-

A new report shows how much we pay for the arts and where the money goes. The Department of National Heritage emerges as the big spender, but Dalya Alberge finds a few surprises

ern Ireland offices. The report, focusing on funding levels in 1993-94, before the launch of the National Lottery, concluded that the sector employed almost 500,000 people in 1994, 2 per cent of the national labour force, compared with 333,000 in motor manu-

facturing. Artists' incomes tended to be lower than other adult workers and volunteers were found to have contributed seven million hours a year to the sector — the equivalent of about 4,300 full-time jobs. This work, said the report, was worth £27 million at a

conservative estimate. The study found that a third of supported organisations had an operating deficit: their combined losses equalled three quarters of the total value of grants awarded by the then Arts Council of Great Britain. Jennifer Edwards, director of the National Campaign for the Arts, said: "What needs to be emphasised is the money generated by the cultural sector. The Government gives all this money, but it has to be put into context, with tax and national insurance."

"The Royal Shakespeare Compa-

ny's latest report shows that almost as much goes back in tax and national insurance as its grant. That's apart from the secondary benefits on the economy."

Bernard Casey, one of the report's authors, echoed the view of many in the sector: "Although the National Lottery has given substantial capital grants to the sector, without a resolution to revenue problems it is possible to imagine a landscape of excellent theatres and galleries which have no events or objects to fill them."

Of the £1.7 billion total funding,

almost 40 per cent goes to museums, galleries and the visual arts. A similar proportion goes to the performing arts and 20 per cent goes to the "built heritage".

The report found that at least as many people attended London theatres as went to Premier League football matches. The British Museum had more than twice as many visitors in 1993 as the Alton Towers theme park.

□ *Culture as Commodity?* BEB Distribution (01202 715555); £19.95.

Arts, pages 29-34

Gamekeepers accused of rare bird cull

By Nick Nuttall, Environment Correspondent

ONE of Britain's rarest birds of prey is being illegally slaughtered by gamekeepers on Scottish grouse moors, scientists said yesterday.

Large numbers of hen harrier eggs, fledglings and adult birds have been destroyed, leaving only about 600 females, according to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Gamekeepers claim that even this small population is threatening their liveli-

hoods by eating grouse eggs and chicks. Landowners want a reduction in the protected status of the hen harrier, *Circus cyaneus*, so that it can be shot under licence.

The society's report, based on surveys of several hundred tagged birds, undermines landowners' claims that the destruction of hen harrier nests and the shooting of the birds are rare, isolated incidents. Mark Avery, the society's head of conservation science, said: "It is this widespread and systematic persecution was not happening in the Scottish uplands, then the hen harrier would be expanding its range to places in

England where it used to nest. But it is being held back." The study, details of which will be disclosed today at the winter meeting of the British Ecological Society at Durham University, surveyed 1,400 nests on grouse moors, conifer forests and moorland not managed for shooting. It shows that, on grouse moors, many fewer females survive to adulthood. The researchers estimate that about 55 birds are killed illegally each year.

Dr Avery said: "We do not claim the hen harrier is a vegetarian. It does eat grouse chicks and adults. But it feeds on a variety of animals, including small birds."

Maurice Hankey, of the Scottish Landowners Federation, said yesterday that he could not comment until he had seen the study in full. The federation did not condone the illegal persecution of birds of prey and was awaiting studies such as the Langham report, to be published next year, which will concentrate on the impact of birds of prey on grouse numbers.

There were, he said, areas where the interests of conservationists conflicted with those of landowners, and there needed to be a way of protecting grouse numbers. "We do not want to declare open season on hen harriers. But there may be some areas where populations are far from endangered and where there is an impact on the local community which it cannot stand."



Liam Kavanagh, 11, with birds at the Ennis Christmas turkey market yesterday

Turkey auction defies spirit of EU Christmas

By Audrey Magee, Ireland Correspondent

ONE of Ireland's few surviving live turkey markets was held in the west of Ireland yesterday, defying the commissars of Brussels and the age of the vacuum-packed bird.

Farmers' wives from Co. Clare arrived at the market place on the outskirts of Ennis with tethered turkeys, geese and ducks in car boots and horsebox trailers. They had spent four months feeding and growing the birds for yesterday's annual Christmas auction.

It is something the women of the area have done for centuries. Twenty years ago the farmers' wives used to sell turkeys on the streets of Ennis. Now the birds are sold in the cattle and sheep markets on the edge of the town. Ten years ago there were thousands of birds for auction. Yesterday there were fewer than 200 birds and under 150 bidders.

Kathleen Corbett, a goose breeder, said the farmers' wives could no longer compete with the multinational companies selling ready-to-cook Christmas birds. "The ordinary housewife is out working. She doesn't want the bother of killing and plucking a turkey when she can get them oven-ready. You can even buy them stuffed now," she said.

Rose Curley almost gave up breeding turkeys this year. She said people were losing interest and it was not worth all the work. She has been selling live turkeys at

Christmas for the past 23 years. "But, you know, my children would not let me stop. They said it was what made Christmas for them. We all love coming to the market and we want to keep the tradition going for as long as it will last."

The buyers yesterday moved around the 40 metal pens checking the weight and health of the turkeys. They paid more than £1.30 a lb. over twice the supermarket price. Most of the turkeys, many of them free to range in farmers' yards since they were bought as six-week chicks, sold for between £20 and £25.

Gerry Rosengrove was one of the first to buy. He purchased two and said he would kill them immediately by wringing their necks. The birds would hang for a full week before being cooked on Christmas Day. He was disparaging of EU legislation, which directs that he should take the turkeys to an abattoir to have them killed.

"I have been coming here for the past eight years. I can see what I am getting. I know what I am killing and with all this BSE stuff going on you like to know what you're eating. And you know what? It tastes really lovely," he said.

Donal Ryan, general manager of the market, declined to speak for many years when he was running EU directives governing the sale of live birds. "They're a load of codswallop,"

Scots bank staff vote to strike

Banking staff in Scotland are threatening to strike on January 2 over the abolition of their extra day off at new year. They are being asked to take Easter Monday off instead of January 2.

Of the 15,000 members of the Banking, Insurance and Finance Union in the four main Scottish clearing banks and the Lloyds Bowmaker finance house who were balloted, more than half voted and 70 per cent backed the action.

ME patronage

The Duke of Kent, whose wife is suffering from chronic fatigue syndrome, has agreed to become patron of the ME Association. The Duke accepted the invitation in late November, before the announcement that the Duchess had been diagnosed as having ME.

Temple prize

A project to build a Hindu temple in Warley, near Birmingham, was given £3.3 million of £40 million lottery money handed out by the Millennium Commission. The biggest grant was £14.8 million for restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

Dempster payout

Baron Steven Benthick accepted £50,000 libel damages from the *Daily Mail* over a report in "Nigel Dempster's gossip column. It said, incorrectly, that his proposed divorce from his wife, Nora, would leave her destitute."

Weighty matter

The Slimmers World group said it had been banned from meeting in a Gloucestershire hotel because of discrimination against fat people. The management of the Stratton House Hotel said the decision was purely financial.

Jet-power Santa

A giant Antonov transport jet left Liverpool airport yesterday carrying 65,000 shoe boxes packed with toys and gifts for children in Armenia. A further 100,000 boxes have left by road for eastern Europe in Operation Christmas Child.

Paper boy fear

Concern is growing for a boy who went missing after leaving home at 6.40am on Saturday for a paper round. Matthew Wells, 15, from Aldridge, West Midlands, was wearing jeans, black T-shirt and a Liverpool hat.

Gromit on stage

Wallace and Gromit, the Oscar-winning creations of animator Nick Park, will be touring Britain in the spring in a stage play devised by London-based John Gore productions, featuring actors in costumes.

Church regains papers that tell of Mary's tearful end

By Ruth Gledhill, Religion Correspondent

THE Church of England paid nearly £100,000 yesterday for a collection of church and state documents, including an eyewitness account of the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots. They had once been property of the Church but were lost to it more than 350 years ago.

After donations from bodies including the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the Friends of Lambeth Palace Library, the Church succeeded in acquiring five out of seven lots of 16th-century documents from a collection known as the Fairhurst Papers.

The Church is still hoping to buy another one from a London bookseller who outbid its dealer at Sotheby's. The seventh went to a foreign buyer.

The papers are considered integral to the nation's records because they com-

plete the 66 volumes of Elizabethan papers already stored at Lambeth Palace Library. They will be open to public scrutiny after the first time since the Civil War.

The papers record how, to the last, the Roman Catholic Mary protested her innocence of charges that she had been party to plotting against her Protestant cousin, Queen Elizabeth. The account, written in a "cursive secretary's hand" says of her last minutes: "After blubbering a while, she said yf ever I made anye such devise against the Queene, my sister, I praye God I never see the face of God... then laye she downe very quiettlye stretchinge out her bodye, laying her necke over the block, cryed, in manus tuas domine."

The letter describes how her bloody clothes, the block and anything else stained with her blood was burnt in

the chimney fire. The library paid £6,900 for the execution account and £45,500 for a letter commanding the execution of Mary signed by the Privy Council.

The papers were part of a collection once owned by John Selden, a 17th-century politician who took them from Lambeth Palace, the London home of the Archbishop of Canterbury, when the incumbent of the time, William Laud, was taken to the Tower in 1641.

The papers were an archive of the Tudor and Stuart archbishops of Canterbury. After Mr Selden died they passed to his executor and remained lost from sight until 1939 when they were discovered by James Fairhurst. Lambeth Palace acquired most of them in 1963 and 1968. The palace library, founded in 1610, remains the Church's principal library.

'Uninhabited' bomber is politically correct option for RAF of the future

By Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent

THE RAF fighter bomber of the future could be an "uninhabited" aircraft flown by a crew sitting at a desk back in the office. The Ministry of Defence is to spend £35 million on researching options for the 21st century and nothing will be ruled out.

The study, announced in a Commons written answer yesterday, will help to decide whether the RAF should go truly futuristic or stick to a more conventional design to replace the existing Tornado GR4 bomber in the second decade of the next century. A programme called Future Offensive Air System is designed to find the most cost-effective 21st century bomber.

A pre-feasibility study has already produced a number of ideas and yesterday the MoD published an artist's impression of an unmanned aircraft to underline the range of



The Defence Ministry's impression of the pilotless bomber, flown from behind a desk on the ground

proposals that will be examined. However, it is called an "uninhabited air vehicle" to remove all gender implications, making it the first politically correct aircraft design. RAF sources said the plane could be flown by a crew sitting at a desk; from inside a virtual reality cockpit on the ground; or while flying in another aircraft such as an E3 AEWACS early-warning plane.

Another option outlined by the MoD would do away with

the bomber and rely instead on air-to-ground missiles launched at very long range from transport aircraft. The missiles could be fired from pallets-in-the-sky dropped by the transport plane.

A third option would be to buy a combat aircraft off the shelf, such as a derivative of the American Joint Strike Fighter, now under development. The MoD has not ruled out developing an aircraft with America, such as a new

version of the American F22 combat plane, although a European collaboration would seem more likely. The least futuristic option is a derivative of the Eurofighter multiple combat aircraft, due to come into service in 2002, replacing the Jaguar and Tornado F3.

The son-of-Eurofighter option would seem to be the favourite, RAF sources said, because it could be developed in collaboration with Britain's Eurofighter partners, Germany, Italy and Spain. Other countries, such as France and Sweden, could also be involved.

To meet the specifications for a future offensive air capability, the Eurofighter variant would have to have a longer range, be designed with advanced stealth technology, have the capacity for a heavy weapon load and be far less reliant on refuelling tankers than current combat aircraft.

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Kennedy snaps under pressure from paparazzi

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

A BRAWL in a New York street suggests that John Kennedy Jr, son of the late United States President, has reached breaking point with the paparazzi who follow his every move.

Mr Kennedy and his new bride, Carolyn, have been hounded by freelance photographers since they returned from their autumn honeymoon. On Sunday the couple were out walking their dog in central Manhattan when they heard, yet again, the sound of camera motor drives. For once Mr Kennedy, 36, decided not to turn the other cheek. He marched over to one of the photographers' cars, reached through the open window and tried to seize the ignition key.

The incident illustrated the intolerable degree to which the Kennedys are being pursued by celebrity press photographers — every bit as intrusive as the paparazzi who dog the Royal Family. It came after

they learnt that some of their wedding photographs were stolen during a post-marriage party thrown for them at the home of Mr Kennedy's sister, Caroline.

The wedding was conducted amid high secrecy to frustrate the press. It is thought that a guest at the party stole the personal snapshots with the intention of selling them.

Public figures in America are becoming increasingly militant about the "snappers". The problem has been exacerbated by the growing market for video footage of well-known people. The rewards for photographers can be lucrative and the people do not always need to be famous in their own right: the sons and daughters of public figures are considered fair game.

The celebrities' responses range from aggression — Robert De Niro has been known to accost photographers and push them in the chest — to

commercial pressure. The actor George Clooney, supported by many Hollywood stars, has refused to co-operate with a leading "soft" showbusiness nightly television programme unless it forced a harder-nosed sister programme to call off its "stalkerazzi" photographers. The play has been largely successful.

During Sunday's incident, Mrs Kennedy broke down in tears while her husband, clearly enraged, led her to their flat. Before they went inside they flagged down a passing police car which chased the photographers away.

"John went ballistic," Marcel Thomas, a paparazzo, said. During the tussle for the car keys, he also pleaded with the photographers for privacy. Once he and Mrs Kennedy were safely inside the lobby of their building, he placed an arm round her shoulders to console her.



John Kennedy Jr and wife Carolyn outside their flat in October after honeymooning

Meteorite ignites village's coffee crop in Honduras

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

A METEORITE has crashed in a remote area of Honduras, leaving a 165ft crater and setting fire to several acres of coffee crops.

News of the incident, which has sparked great scientific interest, took more than two weeks to filter out because of the remote location of the crater.

Witnesses said a large fireball plummeted to earth during the night of November 22 in a remote area of coffee fields about 125 miles west of Tegucigalpa, capital of the small Central American country.

"We saw a large ball of fire, with a long tail that rapidly descended from the sky and fell... before our incredulous eyes," said Elmer Rivera, a schoolteacher near the village of San Luis.

"There were enormous flames and everything was destroyed," said Francisco Aguilar, a farmer.

Honduran authorities have advised those living in the area to stay away from the crater until scientists can examine it for possibly harmful

substances. Scientists say that falling meteorites are not uncommon. "It does demonstrate that there is a level of risk, which is correlated to the size of the object," said Dr Jacqueline Milton, a scientist at the Royal Astronomical Society.

Experts say the Honduran meteorite may have been only a foot wide. But travelling at an estimated speed of almost 25,000 miles an hour (6.8 miles a second) the impact of the rocky missile created a huge crater.

The chances of a large meteorite hitting Earth are small, say scientists. Last month a three-mile-long asteroid, Toutatis, passed within 3.3 million miles of Earth. If an object of that size did hit, experts say it would be the equivalent of a massive nuclear explosion that could wipe out the human race. The impact might cause a curtain of dust to blot out the sun, producing the equivalent of a "nuclear winter" not unlike the theory which some say explains the extinction of the dinosaurs.



Only four Checker taxis are still operating

New York's Checker cabs at end of road

New York: One of the most potent symbols of postwar New York, the yellow Checker cab, is on the verge of extinction (Quentin Letts writes).

There are only four Checkers left on the streets of Manhattan, four lumbering, genial giants of a New York taxi fleet which once numbered 5,000. The last examples are likely to be retired early next month after new requirements by the city's Taxi and Limousine Commission that cabs should not be more than five years old.

The 1950s-style Checker, with a long wheelbase and sitting high on the road, was New York's answer to the London black cab. It was roomy, big enough to bludgeon its way through traffic, and tough enough to withstand the potholes of the Manhattan public carriage-way. Unlike the London cab, however, it failed to adapt. It went out of production in 1982 and has gradually been replaced by smaller, less comfortable Ford Crown Victorias and Chevrolet Caprices.

One of the last Checker drivers, Earl Johnson, is not optimistic about the old warriors being given exemption from the commission's new rules. "But if they take the Checker, I'm gone too," said Mr Johnson, 59.

A decision by the commission on the future of the cab is expected in March.

Two-seater fatties made butt of fines on subway

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

SUBWAY passengers are being fined under a 1940 law which forbids people from taking up more than one seat.

Allegations of "fatism" and pettiness have been aimed at city officials for imposing the law, which on the face of it appears unkind to broader-beamed passengers. But New York's Police Department yesterday defended itself, saying that the law was being used simply to stop thugs and tramps from taking up too much room in the carriages.

The \$50 (£31) fines are being issued at a rate of about 400 a week, generating useful revenue for the city and no shortage of grumbles. "When you give out the number of summonses we give out in this city, you are always going to have someone who is unhappy," said Howard Saffir, New York City's Police Commissioner.

Zachary Schlee, 19, a student, claimed that a policeman apologised when he was fined on the one-seat-only law. "The officer gave me a sob story about how he knew the ticket was petty and horrible, but that they were under pressure from the Mayor," said Mr Schlee, who claimed he was in a near-empty carriage reading a book and sitting lengthwise on a two-seat bench when he was fined.

The subway's moulded seats are of only average width and large folk regularly spill over onto a second seat.

Officer Kevin Tyrrell, on behalf of New York police, yesterday denied that the law was unfair to fat people. "The law is there as a tool and it is being used simply to stop people sleeping on trains."

A straw poll of riders on one subway train showed support for Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's seat campaign. "About time," said one elderly woman who said she had "had enough of having to stand".

Critics rain prizes on slice of London life

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

A LOW-BUDGET film about love, prejudice and other realities of south London life has won three major prizes from a group of Los Angeles film critics.

Secrets and Lies, a profoundly British drama directed by Mike Leigh, won the Los Angeles Film Critics Association's awards for best film, best actress (Brenda Blethyn) and best director.

As the awards season gets under way in an exceptionally strong year for films from both sides of the Atlantic, *Secrets and Lies* prevailed over Woody Allen's new musical *Everybody Says I Love You*, and such big-budget rivals as *The English Patient* and *The People vs Larry Flynt* (about the publisher of *Penthouse*).

In the film, which won the Palme d'Or at this year's Cannes film festival, Ms Blethyn plays a chain-smoking, working-class mother adrift in a midlife crisis of

part-time jobs and flaming rows with her one daughter. The plot thickens when she turns out to have another, who is out to find her, having been adopted at birth.

Developed over many months without a script or a single special effect, *Secrets and Lies* is Mr Leigh's fourth film to win critical acclaim in America (his others include *Life Is Sweet* and *Naked*), but the first to put him in contention for an Oscar night.

Last week the New York Film Critics Circle voted *Shine*, an Australian release about a gifted but troubled pianist, the year's best film. Both critics' groups are known for favouring experimental films over mainstream ones, but at least their prestige is not in doubt.

Recent revelations of alleged corruption have tarnished the image of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, which runs the Golden Globes.

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Kuwait wins \$610m for Gulf War oil inferno

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

A UNITED NATIONS commission is recommending that Kuwait should receive \$610 million (£370 million) in damages for the inferno started by Iraq in the Kuwaiti oilfields at the end of the Gulf War.

The award would compensate Kuwait for one of the worst Iraqi atrocities during its seven-month occupation of the emirate.

As allied troops marched on Kuwait in February 1991, retreating Iraqi soldiers set ablaze about 700 oil wells. The conflagration burnt for weeks, sending columns of acrid smoke high into the atmosphere, before the flaming wells were capped.

Abdul Rahman al-Houty, the former chairman of Kuwait's Public Authority, described the fires as "the most notorious and injurious of all the many direct losses suffered as a result of Iraq's unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait".

The Kuwait Oil Company had asked the Geneva-based UN Compensation Commission for \$950 million in damages in the first corporate claim assessed by the agency.

Diplomats said yesterday that a three-judge panel, appointed by the commission, had recommended \$610 million in compensation to meet the cost of extinguishing the fires. The panel rejected \$3

million claimed for firefighting payments to Kuwaiti oil workers and deferred the remaining \$337 million to another claim dealing with the loss of physical infrastructure.

The Compensation Commission's governing council, composed of the Security Council's 15 member states, met yesterday to discuss the recommendation but was unable to reach a decision. Diplomats said a number of commission members had raised technical problems, but that formal approval could come as early as today.

"I don't think there is anyone there with a political agenda to disrupt this, but equally there are a lot of people who have spoken up to raise rather smallish points," one official said. "People are aware that this is \$600 million of Iraq's money going to a single claimant and they want to be sure we are taking the right decision."

Iraq has objected to the Kuwait claim, insisting that the oil wells were set alight by allied bombing during the United States-led Operation Desert Storm to liberate Kuwait. Baghdad also complains that the UN trade embargo deprived it of funds for a legal challenge.

Since it was created in 1991, the commission has received \$200 billion in claims from



Oil workers cap a Kuwaiti oil well after putting out the blaze. Iraqi troops set about 700 wells on fire as they retreated from the emirate

individuals, companies and governments who suffered losses in the Gulf War. Until recently, its ability to pay compensation depended on limited government donations and seized Iraqi assets. So far, it has been able to pay out only \$13.4 million to 4,000 priority claimants who lost a close relative or were seriously injured in the conflict.

The commission will soon be able to pay out bigger sums as a result of the long-delayed implementation of the "oil for food" deal between the UN and Iraq, which sets aside 30

per cent of Iraq's oil revenues to compensate claimants.

The "oil for food" scheme allows Iraq to sell up to \$1 billion of crude oil every three months to buy food for its people, so the compensation fund will soon start getting about \$100 million a month.

About 240 British citizens have got a total of \$402,500 in compensation for personal injury or the loss of relatives in the war. Another 1,000 who were forced to flee Kuwait have been awarded a total of \$3.7 million in damages, but have not yet been paid.

Baghdad revives trade links

FROM REUTERS IN DUBAI

IRAQ, ostracised by world oil markets since its invasion of Kuwait six years ago, has found little difficulty in enticing foreign oil companies to rekindle former ties, Gulf-based Western traders said yesterday.

"It has been a long wait. Now it's finally over... Iraq is back as a marketing force."

said a Gulf trader as Iraqi oil exports flowed back onto the international markets under a strictly monitored United Nations "oil for food" plan.

Iraq's petroleum exports had been restricted to limited sales to Jordan, but there was large-scale smuggling by road tankers through Turkey and by ships through Gulf waters.

Muhammad Rasheed, Iraq's Oil Minister, said on Sunday that Baghdad had

signed oil contracts with 11 foreign firms, including some in America which led the force that ejected Iraqi forces from Kuwait in the Gulf War.

Treatment for sons: Iraqi authorities have ordered a Medevac plane to take President Saddam Hussein's son, Uday, to Switzerland for treatment for gun injuries he suffered in an ambush last week, according to the Arabic newspaper *al-Hayat*.

Rifkind looks forward to key year for progress in Cyprus

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

MALCOLM RIFKIND, the Foreign Secretary, said yesterday that 1997 could be a critical year for Cyprus, but he drove home the message that it was up to the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities to solve the island's long-running problem. Friendly powers like Britain would, however, do their utmost to help to break the "logjam".

At the same time, Mr Rifkind issued a warning that there were too many troops deployed on the island and that any further build-up would be a mistake that could damage intense international efforts to start face-to-face peace talks between the two sides. He hoped these would begin early next year.

Mr Rifkind came with no new peace plan, but detailed a

ten-point proposal that he said could help reconciliation. He acknowledged that major problems remained and refused to raise hopes. "I haven't used the word optimism. I have expressed hope and realism," he said after separate talks with President Clerides and Rauf Denktaş, the separatist leaders of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. They have not met directly for more than two years.

"I sense there is a view in both communities that 1997 is a crucial year which could mark radical progress or be a massive lost opportunity," he said. There were grounds for hope in the fact that, unlike other international trouble-spots, both sides had long agreed on a common objective

which was to reunite under a bi-zonal federation.

However, the exact nature of that federation and issues like sovereignty, territory and security guarantees have bedevilled negotiations. Mr Rifkind's proposals, in keeping with well-known United Nations plans, addressed these concerns in some detail. They spoke of political equality for the two communities, international security guarantees and a redrawing of the present dividing line that could help the return of many refugees from 1974.

Mr Rifkind's official visit, which lasted less than 24 hours, was the first by a senior British government minister since Cyprus gained its independence from Britain 36 years ago.

Calls for release of Chechnya captives

FROM RICHARD BESSTON IN MOSCOW

URGENT contacts were under way last night between Russian and Chechen officials to secure the release of 22 servicemen, kidnapped at the weekend by a renegade Chechen guerrilla leader.

In the first serious test of the peace deal signed in August between the Kremlin and Chechen separatists, Salman Raduyev seized the Russians and vowed to continue fighting against Moscow's rule. He has said that his hostages will be released only when he receives an apology from a local Russian commander and Chechen prisoners are freed.

The missing men, from an Omon paramilitary force, were abducted on Saturday in Dagestan, which borders Chechnya. The Russians have said that, unless the men are freed unharmed, the entire deal ending 21 months of fighting could be jeopardised. Under the accord, Moscow has agreed to withdraw its troops, 8,000 of whom are still in Chechnya and the Chechens are to hold presidential polls on January 27. The strain in relations is just what Mr Raduyev wanted. Last January, scores of people died when the Russians tried to free hostages held by the commander in Dagestan. He and his "Lone Wolf" group escaped into nearby hills.

US statesmen join forces to save Israel peace plan

FROM ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM

THREE former US Secretaries of State and five other former American officials have called on Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, not to expand Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

The group took the unusual step of sending a letter to Mr Netanyahu's office, warning that any expansion of settlements could destroy the peace process.

It was signed by James Baker and Lawrence Eagleburger — who were Secretaries of State in the George Bush Administration — and Cyrus Vance, who was the Secretary of State under Jimmy Carter. Next to their signatures were those of former National Security Advisers Zbigniew Brzezinski, Frank Carlucci, Brent Scowcroft, Richard Fairbanks and Robert Strauss. Five of them are Republicans and three are Democrats.

In their letter, the former American political leaders and officials said: "We write to you since we fear that one-sided steps — such as settlement expansion — will be very counter-productive to the goal of reaching a solution through negotiations. If it is carried out, it could stop the progress that has been reached in the peace process in the past two decades."

"We therefore called you, just as we called everyone on the Arab side, as the Prime Minister of Israel, to prevent one-sided action that will prevent an agreed-upon arrangement."

ment and a lasting and comprehensive peace."

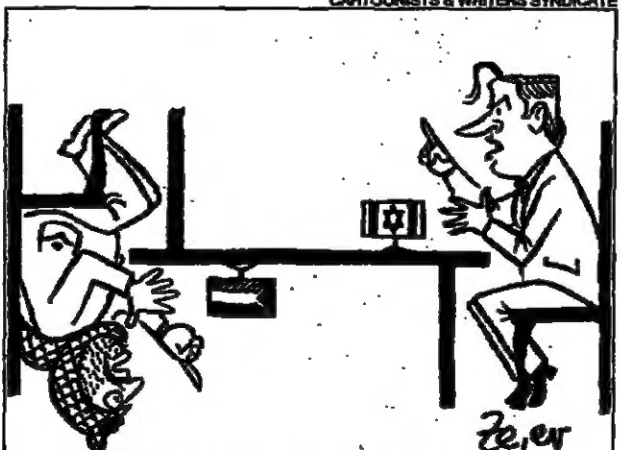
David Bar-Ilan, Mr Netanyahu's communications director, confirmed that Israel had received the letter and was not surprised by its sentiments. He pointed out that George Schultz and Henry Kissinger, both former US Secretaries of State, refused to add their names to the letter.

"These eight people were known as not the most friendly to Israel to say the least... Israel's real friends not only refused to sign this letter but are expressing their support for our policies all the time."

The Israelis and the Palestinians, under American pressure, agreed in principle yesterday to resume negotiations on troop redeployment in Hebron.

Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader, expressed his sorrow for the killing of a Jewish settler woman and her son by Palestinian terrorists last week. "Please accept my sincere condolences over the death of the mother and her son," he said. He said he had called on George Habash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, to "stop the terror". Mr Habash's Damascus-based group last week admitted responsibility for the attack.

In reply, Mr Netanyahu expressed his sorrow over the killing last week "by mistake" of a Palestinian worker by an Israeli. It was the leaders' first conversation since September.



Zeev in Tel Aviv's Maariv, takes a pessimistic view of talks between the Israeli and Palestinian leaders

Toy store sets up wish list for small shoppers

BY QUENTIN LETTS

AN AMERICAN toy store company has introduced wedding list-style registries for children. The scheme encourages children to name as many as 25 toys they would like, regardless of cost.

Their youthful desires are placed on a nationwide computer which feeds uncles and aunts, if uncertain about what to give "Junior" for Christmas, may consult. Toys 'R' Us has introduced its children's gift registry to an initial test sample of 140 stores in the United States. The response has been enthusiastic, and the registries are likely to spread.

At one Manhattan outlet, a Toys 'R' Us sales assistant, engulfed by piling six-year-olds, said the response had been amazing, before she disappeared from sight amid a melee of small hands. The company introduced the idea after the success of a similar scheme for parents of infants.

Debbie Williams, a spokeswoman, claimed the registry would "save people a lot of headaches". To register, a child must fill out a form, ticking required presents after a tour of the aisles — just as betrothed couples do at Peter Jones.

On registration, the child receives a wad of gift registry cards which can be sent to relatives and friends. They are advised that they can go to their local Toys 'R' Us and buy the toy, which will be delivered to the recipient's home address.

Lori Mammen, a parental guidance consultant, attacked the idea as an unwanted commercialisation of the traditional letters children write to Father Christmas. "This encourages materialism, depersonalises families and discourages the whole idea of giving," said Ms Mammen, editor of *Think*, an educational journal.

"We already make children expect too much, and people spend too much on kids' presents. Now children will just think 'put in your order and you will get what you want'," she said.

At the weekend there was further evidence that Christmas shopping is no place for fainthearts when a New Brunswick store worker had to be taken to hospital after being crushed by over-eager consumers.



Santa: threatened with redundancy

Border car theft drives Germans wild

Heiner was still distraught as he left Berlin police headquarters. On Saturday, a few hours after the European Union made a ringing commitment to fighting organised crime, he had lost his pride and joy, a cream Audi.

"It's probably already on its way to Kiev or somewhere," he grumbled. Discovering the theft, reporting it and flicking through an album of suspects had taken 24 hours. From Berlin it is 30 miles to the Polish border.

The trail does not go completely cold when the car crosses Germany's eastern frontier, but the bureaucratic paper chase certainly slows things down. Heiner, a soft-wearing salesman in his thirties, is right in assuming that his pale beauty is now blue or black, with different plates and different identity papers. By today or tomorrow, the car might be ferrying a Romanian businessman to his favourite Bucharest disco.

Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, wants an "operational police force" in Europe

Vehicle crime is so serious it poses a political threat to Helmut Kohl and lends urgency to his plan for a European police unit, Roger Boyes reports from Berlin

to crack down on organised crime — and East-West car theft is high on the agenda. Many citizens are beginning to lose faith in a Europe which, by dint of open borders and a single market, has made the Continent a lucrative hunting ground for car thieves. The car theft figures — 130,000 a year in Germany, 287,000 in France — are making an impact on public acceptance of another of Herr Kohl's European goals — to enlarge the EU eastwards by 2000.

The Chancellor knows votes are at stake. In his briefing to German journalists at Dublin, he said: "The whole subject of mafia activity, drugs and crime will decide the general election in 1998." Europe had to be made flexible enough, he said, to

deal with cross-border crime. Herr Kohl nowadays avoids public mention of the phrase "European FBI", but the idea of a federal police unit still has him in thralls. Europol has extended its brief to take in organised car theft and the Chancellor wants the unit to be operational before the October 1998 election.

The daily practice of the Schengen agreement has drifted away from the utopia of continental Europe allowing the unimpeded travel possible across the United States. The Germans have been positioning vehicle monitoring units just behind the western frontiers with France and the Benelux states.

The thieves' destinations are not only eastern. Stolen

German cars are often shifted quickly to Belgium, resprayed and renumbered, and then taken south to Spain and North Africa. Many a BMW parked overnight in a multi-storey car park has ended up in Morocco. But the main demand is in the East: the new rich of the post-communist states are hungry for fast cars. Legal purchase and import from the West is very costly.

Professor Ulrich Sieber of Würzburg University has drafted a report on behalf of the German police recommending a European car registration system. He urges an end to the registering of cars by post — all vehicles should be physically presented to an authorised examiner. And when a car is wrecked, its papers should be sent immediately to the insurer who should cross-register the documents with the police. The reason is that gangs are buying up wrecked cars, ostensibly for scrap, and then using the identity documents to cover a new stolen car of the same make.

The Poles are beginning to

co-operate quite actively with the German authorities. But because one in three of the car thefts in Germany is connected with some kind of insurance fraud, bilateral co-operation has been slowed. Typically, three German friends might visit a Polish town, eat a long slap-up meal in a restaurant and then report their car stolen.

The Polish police can sometimes trace such cars quickly but are reluctant to return the vehicles until insurance fraud has been ruled out. That often means waiting for the thieves to be caught and sentenced — a process that can last for many months.

Herr Kohl's demands for a "common area of justice" in Europe may ring alarm bells for British Eurosceptics, but they are welcome in Central Europe, where car theft is as annoying as it is in Germany. The political will is certainly there in Warsaw — three successive interior ministers have had their cars stolen and so has the Prime Minister.



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Trading trash



Giles Coren
on the two-way
transatlantic
traffic in
celebrities

The proposed displacement of Sylvester Stallone from Miami to London looks set to cause a crisis on the international celebrity market, with a big rush on London occasioned by the weakness of the celebrity pound in relation to the celebrity dollar. The market may soon go into free-fall. For a long time there was a sort of equilibrium between Britain and America, and despite a deregulated market there was a reasonable balance of trade.

They took David Hockney. We swiped Stanley Kubrick. Tracey Ullman defected with her own unique brand of in-your-face humour. Ruby Wax crossed the sea to make good the deficit, with her own unique brand of in-your-face humour.

In journalism we took a gamble, going very long on glamourpusses such as Anna Wintour. Tina Brown and Zoë Heller, not to mention former *Modern Review* editor Toby Young. Expecting to recoup our investment we got, instead, Janet Daley and a brief visit from Bill Bryson.

If they are sending us Stallone then we want to offload some of our rubbish in return, thank you very much.

We tried giving them Liz and Hugh and they sent them right back, via Paris. Perhaps they would consider taking Chris Evans. Anthea Turner and Tamara Beckwith as some sort of recompense. Notwithstanding the attempt to kidnap Wallace and Gromit some weeks ago.

The Duchess of York is also planning a sharp exit. She apparently wants to live in Wyoming, the enormous state best known as the place "where the deer and the antelope play, and seldom is heard a discouraging word..." She should be so lucky.

If we are going to export our Royal Family, then we will expect something in return — like the Jacksons. Fergie for LaToya, Michael for Diana, etc. It all seems to work rather nicely.

Madonna dropped a hint recently about moving here, and unsubstantiated rumours put Cher's new address as somewhere in London's Docklands. But two ageing rock chicks would hardly make up for the loss of Fergie and Di. Then again...

The thing to bear in mind is that American celebrities think London is the best city in the whole wide world and they just love the audiences here, and want to stay forever. They always say so on chat shows, so it must be true. All the same, Michael Jackson said exactly that on a

recent tour of Budapest — and if Jacko is planning to buy a house in Hungary, then Billy Jean is not his lover.

Look at *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*. Every single performer is North American: Mike McShane, Greg Proops, Ryan Stiles. This is a good deal. They are funny. Let us only despatch Jim Davidson, Angus Deayton and the whole cast of *2Point4 Children* and we will be able to lay down the groundwork for parity.

There is still work to be done, however. How on earth did we manage to get lumbered with Rachel Williams (soulless pierced thing from *The Girlie Show*), Katie Puckrick and Caprice Bourret? Does a total failure to charm, move, or sexually arouse Americans mean that we British will necessarily lap them up?

We did manage to offload Amanda de Cadenet, it must be said. But it was a Pyrrhic victory.

As far as really big names go, our days of export are past. Where once we sent out the Collenses, Jackie and Joan, to fly our elegant flag, today it is one-way traffic.

Tom Cruise has fallen in love with our little island since

making *Mission: Impossible* here, and regularly rents Lord Hindlip's Holland Park townhouse for £10,000 a week. Even his children are going native, attending school in Britain while Pa films *Eyes Wide Shut*, a movie by, coincidentally, Stanley Kubrick. Richard Gere is said to be on the brink, and Elle Macpherson, once Australian but American now by residence, said on *Clive Anderson All Talk* on Sunday that she was considering a move to London. The Body makes *The Move*.

We receive all this talentless celebrity, only to export true home-grown talent hoping, by the move, to become celebrated: think of Gary Oldman, Tim Roth, Emily Lloyd and now, apparently, Pop frontman Jarvis Cocker.

It was once so different, with bona fide exchanges of genuinely valuable human commodities.

They gave us T.S. Eliot. We gave them W.H. Auden. They gave us Henry James, we tried to give them Charles Dickens but he returned, it is said, disillusioned. Even quite recently Kingsley Amis defected to teach at Princeton, taking with him the young Martin, who returned but never quite got over it.

So what will Sly do now, cut off from Hollywood? Will it be the RSC? Merchandise? Insiders at the BBC know better. He is, in fact, pencilled in as the long-lost Mitchell brother from *EastEnders*.

Shaven-headed and ready to ass-kick, the short, ugly Sly is crossing the pond for no other reason than to stake his claim as top gezer on the manor, sing a few rounds of "Knees up Muvva Braan" and love his mum.



Arriving? Stallone



Leaving? The Duchess

John Peel tells Noreen Taylor about the other great passion of his life

'A world without Sheila was impossible. I've never known fear like it in my life'

Legendary disc jockey A Radio One institution! A Sixties survivor who still counts A Past-it Pillar of Post-punk Society!

At 51, John Peel is naturally rather resistant to the hackneyed tags that tend to accompany his name.

"I don't look like a legend, never worn a tartan suit or carried a guitar," goes the flat, lugubrious, Liverpoolian drone. "I look like a mini-cab driver. My children find having a C-list celebrity as a father mildly embarrassing. I think I'm fairly anonymous-looking though."

I thought so, too, until he started to leave the Soho restaurant, when heads turned and subdued murmurings of "Hi John" greeted him as he passed tables.

Self-effacement, a hippie Sixties thing, is very big with Peel. "I really am someone who got lucky," he keeps insisting. "A guy who drifted

into a position that I used to think would be the job of my dreams. Still is, in fact... playing records, being a conduit for other people's talent. That's how I see myself."

Yet he is not what you see or hear. He has become the man he wants to be.

John Robert Parker Ravenscroft, middle class, public school educated son of a Cheshire cotton broker, fled his class, its customs and prejudices, for one he felt more at home in. Cool, lefty, laid-back proletarian.

With everybody busy downclassing in the Sixties, Peel followed the trend, adopting a Liverpool accent, which fitted in perfectly with his DJ role.

"My emotional growth has been reversed if you like," he says, trying to explain his background. "As a child I never cried. Not even when getting a six-inch wound stitched, not even as a seven-year-old on the train to boarding school when the carriage was filled with blubbing boys. In my parents' set I was famous as the boy who never cried. Now I do it all the time... well not exactly, but I had my first big blub 20 years ago when our William was born."

"Sheila and I didn't think we'd want children. We saw ourselves as a unit, content with each other. Then Sheila started reading *Just William* stories to me in bed, and after a while we began to feel... oh wouldn't it be nice to have our own little William."

"Mm," he mutters, glancing worriedly at my pad. "I can't imagine what that's going to look like in print."

For more than 30 years, Peel has been the seminal voice of serious rock, too. Never Boyzone. Never nursery bands. We're taking avant-garde, underground rock, man.

Peel's curiosity dissipates once the band has made it... his interest, he claims, is ignited largely by the unknown and the obscure. Doesn't it ever get tedious... year on year of increasingly moronic guitar riffs. Electric anarchy! Doesn't he ever long for the grown-up world of jazz, big bands, Ella, Mozart?

"Yeah, I know what you mean," concedes Peel reluctantly. "Trouble is, I've never reached puberty. Anyway, Benjamin Britten can be just as difficult to come to terms with as the music I play," he adds, an edgy defence creeping into his voice.

Does his wife enjoy the sound of endless tapes being played? Tapes flooding in from every aspirant Dylan on the planet.

"Only to the extent where she'll appear in my room dancing, or if the weather's nice, I'll see her leaping around the lawn outside."

He's a great talker. Funny, frank, wise, modest... someone whose company enriches and informs, who comes armed with a cache of anecdotes collected from years presenting pop programmes.

Currently, there are two weekend Radio One shows, a British Forces Broadcasting Service one whose prehistoric origins are long lost, as well as a BBC World Service slot.

So how come you rarely do television John? "Cos I look funny. And I don't think I'm very good."

Channel Four's *Travels With My Camera*, scheduled to be shown on Sunday, proves otherwise. Peel takes



"I don't look like a legend, never worn a tartan suit. I look like a mini-cab driver"

his battered old left-hand drive Mercedes off to Berlin where he meets up with Schneider, a punk from the former East Germany. Before the fall of the Wall, Schneider used to stay up half the night listening as his hero broadcast to the British forces.

Peel describes his heroes as people who have managed to create something that's perfect. Such as?

"Well, I'd loved to have written something as beautiful as *Teenage Kicks* by The

'My family life contains the easy warmth I never knew as a child'

Aside from obscure rock bands and Liverpool Football Club, John Peel's great passion in life is his wife, Sheila. The woman known to his listeners as 'The Pig'. As titles go, it is not perhaps the most elegant of nomenclatures? "She snorts when she laughs, which is

Later, when the conversation moves round to Sheila again, he spoke of her moving, and in a way men rarely do when speaking of their wives, or of their marriage. The emotional bruising he suffered last June when his wife collapsed with a brain haemorrhage, remains palpable.

"Flossie, who's 14, youngest of our four children, rang me to say Sheila had been admitted to Addenbrooke Hospital in Cambridge. I was stuck on the Isle of Man, couldn't get back. I remember this hideous blackness descending, the

God-awful trying to struggle through it, trying not to think... you know... what if? The world without Sheila! Just trying to move past that, through that pain. Impossible. Never known fear like it in my life. Children and I, we sat round a table waiting during the 5½-hour operation. They were wonderful, I was so proud of them — forgot all the arguments over the pizza boxes left in their bedrooms."

"Sheila is recovering now, not yet the blur round the

house she usually is, handling all practicalities, dealing with the Aga man. Unlike me, the airy aesthete. I'm always uneasy when I'm away from her now. Hate being away from her anyway, if I'm honest. Until I was 50, I used to spend 20 hours a week on the motorway, between London and Suffolk where we live. I've cut that down to Saturday and Sunday. Yeah, I come home Saturday nights. Have to. Otherwise I get homesick. I'm constantly checking on her, even during the night when I go to the loo. I have to switch on the light, just to be sure. I know I'll be doing that for the rest of my days.

"Sounds as though I'm describing the family from Disneyland with everyone at the front door, jumping up and down shouting 'Hello Daddy', which it certainly isn't."

"It's just that my family life contains the easy warmth I never knew as a child, I find myself envying my children their childhood. Not that I'm blaming my parents, they were helpless having come from the same world."

"Meeting Sheila, who comes

from Bradford, from an Irish Catholic family, a background so radically different from my own, helped to break the cycle. Becoming part of Sheila's family was almost as wonderful as meeting the woman herself."

They met, he recalls with perfect clarity, in the mid-Sixties in a television studio.

Sheila, a graduate trainee teacher, was in the audience with a group of friends.

She was wearing dark green, looked sensational and I sent her a note with my telephone number. She thought I was a twerp but her friends forced her to ring me. I remember the scuffling sound of them all in the telephone box. The note? It probably said something about love and peace. I tended to go on a lot about that in those days, and girls I went out with... pretend models and actresses, would sigh "Ooh, John, that's really beautiful". And then Sheila came along and told me not to be such a daft bugger. Pretty soon it was just the two of us, travelling round the country in the back of a Dormobile looking for our dream home.

"I'm very happy, fully contented. For me, depression comes when I hear of people being treated harshly, when I realise how badly off other people are compared to me."

"Like Elvis I used to believe that if he'd come and lived with us for a couple of weeks, we'd have got him sorted out. Charles and Diana, too. Trouble with people like them is that they're not rooted in any kind of recognisable reality. What they need is someone like me telling them: 'Right, now we're off to Sainsbury's, then we're going to pick up the kids from school. Then we've got to feed the animals.' I really mean that."

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STORMY WATERS

The Government's passage through the winter looks fraught

The long auction of promises which preceded yesterday's fishing debate, as brazen as any Billingsgate sale, will have done nothing for the standing either of Parliament or this Government. The fishermen and farmers were having their wounds bound rather than their palms greased; but there is little dignity about this anguished proposition of special interests, however deserving. In the month, perhaps even weeks, which remain in this Parliament there will be other close votes which the Government will strain to win with cajolery and concessions.

The fishing industry has been an early beneficiary. The Fisheries Minister, Tony Baldry, unwrapped a pre-Christmas package last month with an extra £12 million for the voluntary decommissioning of fishing vessels, a commitment from the European Commission to consult fishermen more closely on conservation policy and a pledge to re-negotiate the common fisheries policy to end the foreign appropriation of UK fishing quotas. The interests of coastal constituencies addressed, the Government yesterday sought allies across the water with policies presented as friendly to Ulster's producers of fish and beef.

Whether this Government will survive long enough to see significant changes through remains in doubt. Conservative strategists may wish to wait until May before going to the country in the hope that a rising tide of prosperity may carry them to victory. Events may mock such hopes. Even if John Major avoids losing a vote of confidence then any march to the election will involve the skirting of a succession of cliffs. Government by fingernail is unlikely to inspire the electorate.

If the Prime Minister is determined to hold out, he has two sources of solace. The Government's remaining legislative programme is relatively uncontentious. On everything from tax cuts to criminal justice

Labour has declined to alienate potential voters with outright opposition. So room for ambush is limited. Moreover, the Ulster Unionists are still, just, likely to support the Government in most potential confidence votes. The Sinn Féin president, Gerry Adams, used an interview this weekend to issue a demand for an early election. If Sinn Féin want to accelerate the election it is in Unionist interests to delay. The Leader of the Ulster Unionists, David Trimble, has said that he will do nothing "capricious". That suggests Mr Trimble is, at present, inclined not to end this Parliament prematurely.

Set against those consolations is the possibility of a set-piece vote on a matter where Conservatives who expect general election defeat might be tempted to make a stand and where Unionist support could not be assured. There are enough conceivable occasions of danger to ensure that Tory nerves are strained throughout the winter and spring.

Conservative business managers have exerted themselves to prevent any substantive vote by the Commons on the regulations which will govern European monetary union. Although MPs were allowed to let off steam for two days last week on a general motion prior to the Dublin summit the Tory whips have been strenuous in trying to prevent an occasion arising where the House might divide on a single currency — knowing that such a division would be perilous.

The Conservatives may conclude that it would be better to call a general election early in the new year rather than risk being boxed into a corner. But, whenever an election might be called, the scale of Conservative dissent with the Government's "wait and see" policy will become embarrassingly apparent. However well-drilled MPs are in the Commons, Conservative candidates are unlikely to fall so easily into line.

HEAD TO HEAD

Airbus has redoubled trouble in its flightpath

Europe's political classes chatter ceaselessly about the pros and cons of integrating the defence of Europe; the quantity of talk always exceeds action by a large margin. In the case of Europe's defence and aerospace industries, relatively little public talk occurs; but the industry reorganises itself anyway. It has little choice. The global market is developing so fast that even the most agile European industries have not been quick enough to keep up with preparations for the 21st century. The merger of Boeing and McDonnell Douglas to form the world's largest aerospace company should further concentrate European minds.

The effective absorption of McDonnell Douglas by Boeing eliminates another rival from a world market in civilian airliners which is becoming a head-to-head contest between Boeing and Airbus Industrie. Aircraft-building firms coalesce into larger and larger units because only the largest revenue-earners can pay for the development of an ambitious and expensive project to design a new wide-bodied passenger aircraft and by the firm's elimination from the short-list to develop America's new military strike jet. The latter contract was won by a joint bid headed by Boeing.

Recent transatlantic competition to sell jets underlines that while Airbus is big and unwieldy, Boeing is big and witty. In 1994, Airbus briefly topped Boeing's total of aircraft sold, but has since fallen behind because it offers an alternative to Boeing in all markets except for jumbo jets.

Both manufacturers now have long order books thanks to the rationalisation of airlines in the US and economic growth creating cash-rich buyers. But Airbus cur-

rently remains a coordinating and marketing company, controlled by British Aerospace, France's Aerospatiale, Germany's Daimler-Benz and Spain's CASA. Each shareholding firm is guaranteed quotas of work, limiting the firm's ability to shop around for the most competitive prices. The companies have agreed to create a giant company, which would include a large segment of Europe's aeronautical capacity, but the negotiations have been painfully slow. To no one's great surprise, Aerospatiale and its state shareholders in Paris have been the most markedly reluctant to move the goalposts. French governments enjoy talking about "building Europe" but, when it comes to construction work which involves loosening the State's grip on what civil servants see as a national economic interest, quite different priorities apply.

In a revealing and dispiriting loss of nerve this month, the French Government stopped the sale of the ailing electronic business Thomson to Korea's Daewoo. Airbus will only be reformed as an agile and aggressive company if its sponsors have the self-confidence to look beyond the near term to the survival requirements of a major aircraft manufacturer over the next two decades. Lumbering consortiums vulnerable to politicians' whims will not hold off the next challenge, the big Asian manufacturing businesses which fancy their chances in the airliner market.

French defensiveness is all the odder in the light of the country's powerful exporting performance over the last few years. If Airbus cares to look at the way in which Boeing has successfully adapted to the challenge from Europe, its executives will see that they now have no good grounds for either hesitation or complacency.

A JOKE AND A JAR A DAY

Social surveys should be entertainment as well as science

Laughter and alcohol (in moderation) are good for you. A scientific survey by researchers at the University of Hull finds this to be so; so it must be true. Dr Geoff Lowe yesterday presented the findings to a meeting of the British Psychological Society, thus confirming the unscientific justifications down the millennia of men moving unsteadily home from the inn.

For not only can jokes and a drink interact medically to improve the circulation of the blood and stimulate the phagocytes; a questionnaire answered by 332 social drinkers on Humber-side shows that those who drank more were mentally less stressed and more inclined to see the funny side of life.

Some aspects of the Hull experiment were rigorous as well as merely interrogative. Two groups of people were asked to watch the first 20 minutes of *The Naked Gun*. Statistics plotted on graphs and illustrated by pie diagrams showed that those who were given two bottles of strong lager laughed more than the control group, who received an alcohol-free drink that only tasted like lager. A gloriously tacky spoof topped off the evening with a corny old gag, hoary cliché and laddish silliness can provide more fun than Merchant-Ivory *bons mots* or more fun than Woody Allen victimising — if observed through a friendly mist of a few drinks.

For such endlessly tasteless and unsophisticated juvenilia would make an audience

ashamed of laughing itself into a stupor, unless it were already half stupefied. This connection between laughter and alcohol has been suspected since Bacchus cracked the first joke, and then told it back to front. But the job of research is to confirm such archetypal folklore. Just as man needs science to solve all the problems he would not have if there were no science, so he needs research to verify his primitive prejudices. The research industry consists largely of such verification projects, as can be seen from any catalogue of proposed doctoral theses from a modern university. Such ancient platitudes as Murphy's Law — "if anything can go wrong, it will" — have been demonstrated by a dozen research projects at considerable expense.

But not only are alcohol and jokes now officially good for us. Scientific surveys must be good for us too. Being stopped in public by researchers with clipboards and imperious questions is one of the pleasures of life, we are told, especially if there are cameras to record instant fame. The psychologists in Hull who thought of researching local pubs in order to conduct their quantity survey of jolliness knew they had a good topic. But their findings as well as their methodology are philanthropic. They have not only confirmed an unproved ancestral suspicion. By their own actions, they must also have improved the public health.

Balancing risks is a risky business

From Mr James Rothman

Sir, Nigel Hawkes (*Mind and Matter*, December 9) asks for a Richter-type scale that enables different risks to be compared. I suggest the number of deaths (or possibly unfortunate events) per thousand person years spent on the activity. This is the same as 8.75 million people engaging in the activity for an hour.

On this "Rothman scale of risk", in terms of death, driving a car scores about 1.5, walking 2.25, cycling 6 and riding a motorcycle nearly 50. Accidental deaths in normal life score about 0.2.

This measure seems to me to be better than suggestions involving logarithmic scales since it is easier to understand and increases with increasing risk. It also has the advantage that unlike deaths per thousand people it takes into account the fact that we spend more time on some activities than others.

My only concern is that people may think that all the numbers indicate greater risks than is in fact the case. Even 50 for riding a motorcycle represents quite a small risk for the occasional rider. Nigel Hawkes mentions playing Russian roulette. Allowing a generous hour per game this scores about 1.5 million.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES ROTHMAN (Consultant in marketing and economic research),
25 Norfolk Road, NW8,
December 9.

From Dr John Adams

Sir, "People need a simple measure of risk which they can use as a basis for decision-making" according to the Royal Statistical Society. Nigel Hawkes quotes the risk of dying in a road accident — 1 in 8,000 — as an example of a potentially useful statistic. The number, based on last year's data, is closer to 1 in 16,000. But this error is trivial compared to the complications that would arise should an individual seek to base a decision upon it.

A young man is 100 times more likely to die in a road accident than a middle-aged woman; someone driving at 3am, Sunday, 134 times more likely than someone driving at 10am, Sunday; someone with a personality disorder ten times, and someone two and half times over the alcohol limit, 20 times. If these factors were all independent of each other one could predict that a disturbed, drunken young man driving at 3am Sunday would be about 2.7 million times more likely to die than a normal, sober, middle-aged woman driving to church a few hours later.

These four factors, of course, are not independent: there are probably proportionately more drunken and disturbed young men on the road in the early hours of the morning than at other times of day. But I have listed only four complicating factors from a very long list. Does the car have worn brakes, bald tyres, a loose suspension, a valid tax disc? Is the road well-lit, dry, foggy, straight, narrow, clear, congested? Is the driver sleepy, angry, aggressive, on drugs?

There is reason to suppose that all these factors, plus many more, can influence your chances of arriving safely. Whether the number used in the Richter scale for road accidents is 16,000 or 1:16,000, it is difficult to see how it could serve as the basis of a decision.

Using past accident rates to estimate future risks can be positively misleading. There are many dangerous roads with good accident records because they are perceived to be dangerous — children are forbidden to cross them; old people are afraid to, and fit adults cross them quickly and carefully.

The good accident record is purchased at the cost of community severance. But the good accident record gets used as a basis for decision-making: officially the road is deemed safe, and in need of no measures to calm the traffic.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN ADAMS,
University College London,
Geography Department,
26 Bedford Way, WC1,
December 10.

Care of South Downs

From Councillor Mark Dunn

Sir, As a member of Chichester District Council whose own ward comprises some 25 square miles of South Downs countryside, and as a member of the development control committee of this, one of the largest planning authorities in the South Downs area, I can assure the nine signatories to today's letter that there is nothing "fragile" or "vulnerable" about the existing legislative and constitutional systems protecting the South Downs, that glorious part of our heritage, from sectional and ill-judged development plans.

It follows that there is no need for them to canvass for the establishment of a National Park where those responsible for overall management and conservation would not be elected, would not be local, and would not have to face up to constant review by an educated and well-informed electorate.

Yours faithfully,
MARK DUNN,
Wildham, Stoughton,
Chichester, West Sussex,
December 11.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Debate on rules of royal succession

From Mr Nigel Miskin

Sir, It hardly seems opportune, with all the vital issues now before the public, to initiate a debate and take up parliamentary time on so rarified a question as whether women should have equal rights to succeed to the throne (report, December 10; article, December 11).

The point raised may have some emotional significance for the politically correct, but its greatest impact would be on the successor to Prince William (assuming he becomes king) several decades from now. Is it not rather arrogant for us to presume to dictate to future generations in this way?

Also, is there any precedent for postponing or abrogating the vested rights of those already in the order of succession (in this case the Princess Royal being raised above the Duke of York, his little daughters and Prince Edward) without any grave political reason to do so?

I would not like to dwell on a future likely consequence, namely the appearance at the Bar of the House of Lords of dozens of hopeful ladies and gentlemen claiming, on grounds of "fairness", to revive extinct hereditary peerages.

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL MISKIN,
149 Hurlingham Road, SW6,
December 11.

Handgun legislation

From Mr Richard Butler

Sir, I am a licensed firearms holder and the owner of handguns, including 9mm and .375 calibre. I own these solely for the purpose of target shooting and have taken part in various competitions in the UK. I do not consider myself an expert shot but I enjoy the sport.

The Firearms (Amendment) Bill currently going through Parliament will effectively put an end to all this. I believe that the proposed legislation is wrong and misguided but if it becomes law, so be it.

I find it somewhat presumptuous of Mrs Sarah Cooper and her co-signatories (letter, December 10) to expect the legislation to make a special case for them on the grounds that they are an elite group of marksmen/women who can win medals for Great Britain.

Either the Bill fails and all pistol owners can continue to enjoy target shooting, or it passes and it applies to everyone, irrespective of their shooting ability.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD BUTLER,
14 Rue Saint Louis en L'Île,
75004 Paris,
December 16.

From Mr J. H. Kinto

Sir, Whilst I sympathise with the Olympic and Commonwealth Games pistol shooters' letter it does seem somewhat selfish. What about the next generation of marksmen? How are they to be selected if they cannot learn to shoot?

What they should be saying is that this is yet more busy, bad legislation. The buying public needs a scapegoat and weak politicians are ever ready to oblige.

As a taxpayer who does not shoot pistols I suppose I should be grateful that such woefully inadequate compensation is to be offered. My sense of justice tells me that this compounds the scandal.

Yours truly,
JOHN KINTO,
Brushwood Farm,
Wantage Road, Fritford Heath,
Abingdon, Oxfordshire,
December 16.

Hong Kong passports

From Mr B. M. Suchak

Sir, I regret that I am unable to place a great deal of reliance on the assurance given by Chris Patten (report, December 9) that, without evidence to the contrary, holders of the British Nationality Selection Scheme passports given to Hong Kong citizens in 1990 will be considered as unquestionably British after the transfer of sovereignty next summer.

All British passports may "look alike" to Mr Patten but they most certainly are not alike in their worth. British Overseas Citizens, British Protected Persons, British Nationals (Overseas) and British Subjects are all British nationals under the British Nationality Act, 1981, but they do not

Gibraltar's sovereignty

From Sir Frederic Bennett

Sir, Mr James Nation (letter, December 9) attempts to align the constitutional situation of Hong Kong with that of Gibraltar, as the former approaches its handover to China next year, implying that this proves the UK cannot be trusted not to surrender the sovereignty of the latter to another power. Such an attempt is entirely misconceived.

Hong Kong has been held in British hands as a leasehold territory. That lease expires in 1997, as a matter of internationally recognised law, disputed by no one. Per contra, Gibraltar is a "freehold" British Crown colony and will so remain as long as its own inhabitants so decide.

In 1968, in my capacity as the

From Mr J. D. Semken

Sir, I do hope that those who support the principle of sexual equality in all things will bear in mind that legislation to secure that end in relation to the succession to the throne might well destroy the monarchy.

The effect of such legislation would be to create a usurping line, so that at some time in the future a princess would not go to her coronation as undoubted Sovereign of this realm. Moreover, she would go to Westminster Abbey accompanied not only by her husband and children, but by her brother, the disinherited heir, and his family whom all the world would be watching for signs of resentment.

Inevitably, the feeling would grow that, rather than that A should bow to B (when properly B should be bowing to A), would it not be less embarrassing if nobody bowed to anybody?

There are some things which Parliament cannot do. It cannot alter history and it cannot alter facts. And, if the Coronation Oath is to have any substance, there are some things which Parliament ought not even to try to do, gratuitously and without compelling reason.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN SEMKEN,
2 The Ridgeway, Mill Hill, NW7,
December 9.

Willets affair

From Mr G. R. Whitten

Sir, You report today that the Prime Minister praised Mr David Willets for "the dignified way that you have conducted yourself". *The Times* says he "deserves credit for... leaving with grace and speed" (leading article, December 12).

Bruce Anderson, however, blows the gaff on these noble sentiments when he writes on the page opposite your leader of "a sensible decision: a short-term sacrifice which will work to his long-term advantage".

Clearly, the restoration of parliamentary probity is still far from being a universal priority.

Yours faithfully,
G. R. WHITTEN,
2 Raglan Terrace,
Monmouth Road,
Abergavenny, Monmouthshire,
December 12.

From Mrs M. Hundleby

Sir, My husband, an old Lincolnshire man, Willets the word want all the time — "Does this book want to go in the case?"... "Does this suitcase want to go in the car?"

So far, he has not accused me of dissembling.

Yours sincerely,
MARION HUNDLEBY,
35 Kelross Road, NS,
December 12.

MPs' pay

From Mr Granville Davies

Sir, The suggestion that higher pay may be one way to continue to attract good judges (article, Law, December 10) reminds me of the recent substantial wage increase awarded themselves by MPs.

Not only has their parliamentary performance sharpened immeasurably, but we can look forward to a high incursion of new talent at the forthcoming general election, probably.

Yours truly,
GRANVILLE DAVIES,
5 Warren Road, Warren Road,
Crowborough, East Sussex,
December 10.

have right of entry to the United Kingdom — a country of which they are nationals.

Those British Overseas Citizens who have connections with East African countries were deprived of their right to come and live in the United Kingdom in 1968 and many of them are still languishing in East Africa and elsewhere (particularly in India).

They have suffered the indignity of being deprived of their nationality altogether by being euphemistically called British Overseas Citizens. They should more properly have been described as British Outcast Citizens.

I remain, yours faithfully,
B. M. SUCHAK,
Suchak & Co (solicitors),
472 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex,
December 6.

constitutional adviser to the Integration with Britain Party then in office in Gibraltar. I was entrusted with drafting the preamble to the agreement signed by the British Government. This recognised in perpetuity the unfettered rights of self-determination for and by Gibraltarians.

Yours etc,
FREDERIC BENNETT,
Plus Cwmlecoedog,
Aberangell, nr Machynlleth, Powys,
December 12.

With the postal delays that often occur at this time of year, it is useful, where possible, for letters that are intended for publication to be faxed to 0171-782 5046. Please give contact telephone numbers.

Debt to surviving PoWs of Japanese

From Mr Anthony L. Burton

Sir, The treatment of British PoWs forced to build the railway in Siam (now Thailand) during the Second World War was considered so bad that for the first time ever a compensation clause was included in the 1951 peace treaty.

Japan, defeated and broke, could only offer to each country their frozen assets to be used for this purpose. Here in Great Britain this worked out at only £72 for each former PoW.

The Japanese maintain that they have paid the amount agreed and that there can be no further claims (report, December 5). One suspects that creating a precedent is greatly feared, as this would lead to a flood of claims from other countries, such as China, which could not possibly be met. Both the British and the Japanese know that countermeasures cannot be taken as we are too involved commercially; and time is not on the side of these PoWs — even those who are still living must be aged 70 or over.

Bearing in mind that our Government signed away our claims for a pittance, surely it should advance the £135 million at issue to the remaining survivors. It could then demand reimbursement on some future occasion, when Japan may want something from us, such as our support for their membership of the Security Council. By that time there probably will be no survivors left.

Yours,
A. L. BURTON
(PoW, Siam, 1942-45),
57 Fairfairs,
Roehampton Lane, SW15,
December 10.

Future of Royal Yacht

From Mr A. V. Alexander and Mr William Clarke

Sir, There was a strong demand in the House of Lords this week for an early decision on the future of the Royal Yacht *Britannia* (report, December 11). Lord Ashbourne, chairman of the all-party Royal Yacht parliamentary group, put the point succinctly, asking: "Has not the Government sat on the fence for long enough?"

Since the present Royal Yacht will complete her last voyage, before replacement or decommissioning, when she takes the Prince of Wales to Hong Kong next summer, such a decision is becoming urgent. The Cabinet committee examining its future was originally expected to announce decisions by the end of 1995, both about the building and financing of a new vessel and about the future of the present vessel.

On that basis the Greenwich Britannia Project put in a formal bid to the Cabinet committee in the autumn of 1995 for the present Royal Yacht to be berthed permanently in Greenwich, with its unique royal, naval and maritime associations, just ahead of the millennium celebrations. We set out exactly how that decision would benefit the nation, and we outlined possible methods of finance.

Although we were promised an early decision, the Cabinet committee later indicated a delay since the disposal of the present vessel was naturally linked to any decision about a new vessel. That was six months ago. Meanwhile fundraising opportunities (dare one say lottery heritage applications?) are being missed month by month. This is one decision that should not wait the election.

Yours sincerely,
A. V. ALEXANDER,
WILLIAM CLARKE,
Joint Chairmen,
Greenwich Britannia Project,
12 Crooms Hill,
Greenwich, SE10,
December 11.

An orderly life

From Mr D. B. Harrison

Sir, It is said that when Mrs Chesterton received the telegram from her husband asking where he ought to be (letter, December 7) she replied: "Come home."

She thought it would be better to get him home and set him off again than to try to redirect him from Market Harborough to his correct destination.

Yours faithfully,
DENIS HARRISON,
2 Leicester Close,
Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire,
December 9.

Wise after the event

From Mr Alistair Dickson

Sir, The possible identity of "three wise men" who might attend the birth of a present-day Jesus has, over recent Christmases, entertained and stimulated a lively conversation amongst friends. Several of the names suggested have been people long deceased, which may be an indication that wisdom is less prevalent today or is only appreciated posthumously.

I would personally be content with the compassion and wisdom of the Dalai Lama, Nelson Mandela and an old shepherd I know.

Yours faithfully,
ALISTAIR DICKSON,
Lanrick Estate Office,
The Brioch Farm, Doune, Perthshire,
December 5.

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
December 16: The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron, Outward Bound Trust, this afternoon gave a luncheon at Frogmore House, Windsor Home Park.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
December 16: The Prince of Wales this afternoon visited the offices of *Perspectives* magazine at Hyde Street, London W1.

Today's royal engagements

The Princess Royal, as Patron of the College of Occupational Therapists, will open the new facilities at the Maudsley Hospital, SE5, at 4.00.

The Duke of Kent will attend the Bach Choir concert at St James's Palace at 6.00.

Princess Alexandra will attend a Joy to the World Christmas celebration at the Albert Hall at 7.15.

Service dinner

Combined Cadet Force
Admiral Sir Peter Abbot, Commander-in-Chief Fleet, was the principal guest at the annual officers' dinner of the Combined Cadet Force Association held last night at the Imperial Hotel, London. General Sir Geoffrey Howlett presided and Lieutenant-Colonel R.F. Somerset, of Winchester College, was chairman of the dinner. Major-General A.M. Keeling, Major-General P.C. Stapleton, Air Vice-Marshal P.J. Harding and Air Vice-Marshal R. Honey were among the guests.

Luncheon

Cardiff Business Club
The High Sheriff of South Glamorgan, Mr R.V. Rees and the Deputy Lord Mayor of Cardiff, Councillor Max Phillips, were present at a luncheon held by the Club yesterday in honour of the Hon Nicholas Soames, Minister of State for the Armed Forces. Mr Brian K. Thomas, Chairman, Cardiff Business Club, presided.

Today's birthdays

Mr Peter Blackburn, president, Nestlé France, 56; Dame Mary Cartwright, former Mistress, Girton College, Cambridge, 96; Professor Mark Casson, economist, 51; Mr Christopher Cazenove, actor, 51; Mr David Collett, chairman, Volunteer Centre UK, 62; Viscount Deventry, 75; Lord de Villiers, 85; Lord Glenamara, CH, 84; Mr Bernard Hill, actor, 82; Miss Gwendoline Kirby, former mayor, Great Ormond St Hospital for Sick Children, 85; the Hon Dominic Lawson, Editor, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 40;

YORK HOUSE
ST JAMES'S PALACE
December 16: The Duke of Kent, Colonel-in-Chief, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, today received Lieutenant-Colonel Jolyon Williams on assuming the appointment of Regimental Secretary and Colonel Joseph Hordern on relinquishing the appointment.

Christening

The infant daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Little was christened Georgia Elsie Medina by the Rev John Robson, Chaplain to the Queen, at the Queen's Chapel of the Savoy, on Thursday, December 12. The godparents are Sir Michael Richardson, Mr Adam Signy, Mrs Corale Mue-Cowper and Mrs Sara Watkins.

Institute of Biology

The following have been elected as Fellows and may use the designatory letters CIBiol FIBiol: Professor William Allen, Professor Colin Blakemore, Dr Leonard Brookes, Dr Roderick Casey, Dr Susan Duke, Dr Michael Elliott, Dr Peter Harman, Mr Trevor Harvey, Dr Graham Jenkins, Dr Keith Kendrick, Professor Brian Legg, Dr Ronald Lewis-Smith, Dr Robert Moor, Dr Jeremy Roberts, Dr John Speakman.

School news

Northwood Preparatory School
The Governors are pleased to announce that Mr Trevor Lee, currently Headmaster of Hendon Preparatory School, has been appointed to succeed Mr Nigel Flynn as Headmaster in April 1997 and congratulate Mr Flynn on his appointment as Headmaster of Twickenham Preparatory School.

Rabbi Hugo Gryn

In memory of the late Rabbi Gryn, a scholarship fund will be set up for students in the Adenick College - a place he loved.

Information: Adenick College, Llanwrtyd Major, Wales, CF81 1WJ. Tel: 0171 388 4005.

The first powered flight was achieved by the Wright brothers in the Kitty Hawk, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, 1903.

The battle of the River Plate: the Graf Spee was scuttled off Montevideo, 1939.

The closure of the Suez Canal resulted in petrol rationing, 1956.

Dinner
Parliamentary and Scientific Committee
Sir Michael Spicer, MP, Chairman of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee, was the host at a dinner held last night at the House of Commons after a meeting of the committee at which Mr Ian Taylor, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Science and Technology, was the speaker.

University news

Oxford
The Wainwright Fellowship for research into the non-classical archaeology of Northern Africa or the Near East has been awarded to Dr Nigel Spencer (Institute for Archaeology, Oxford University) for three years from January 1997.

The 1996 Wainwright Prize has been awarded to Mr Tom Hardwick, Clifton College.

The Queen's College
Elections

Scholarships
Katharine Allen, (formerly of Central Newcastle High School); Jonathan S. Barrett (King Edward's School, Birmingham); Jonathan W. Bell (Norwich School); Max E. Bruche (Schule Birklehof, Hünzarten); Charles W. H. Chapman (Arnold School, Blackpool); June S. Christie (Dunottar School, Reigate); Christopher J. Evans (St Mary's Comprehensive School, Ilkley); Eric H. D. Law (Royal Grammar School, Newcastle); Brandon W. Lewis (Matthew Murray High School, Leeds); Piers H. Master (Harrow School); Simon Webster McKnight (Dr Challoner's Grammar School, Amersham); Andrew D. Morrison (The Kings School, Chesham); R. M. Ng (Queen's College, Taunton); Andrew J. Peckman (Millfield School); Catherine E. Pearson (Boston Spa Comprehensive School); David Perick (Bolton School, Boys' Division); E. Susan L. Pickford (Christ's Hospital, Horsham); Elizabeth K. Poxon (Carnegie School, York); Richard J. Price (Watford Boys' Grammar School).

Anniversaries

BIRTHS Prince Rupert, royalist commander in the civil war, Prague, 1619; Domenico Cimarosa, composer, Naples, 1749; Sir Humphry Davy, inventor of the miners' safety lamp, Penzance, 1778; John Greenleaf Whittier, poet, Haverhill, Massachusetts, 1807; Jules de Goncourt, diarist, Paris, 1830; Ford Madox Ford, novelist and critic, Merton, Surrey, 1873; W.L. Mackenzie King, Prime Minister of Canada 1921-26, 1926-32 and 1935-48, Berlin, Ontario, 1874.

DEATHS Simon Bolivar, Liberator of South America, Santa Marta, Colombia, 1830; William Thomson, 1st Baron Kelvin, physicist, large, Strathclyde, 1907; Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, physician and advocate of women's rights to practice medicine, Aldershot, 1907; Sir Bernard Spilsbury, pathologist, London, 1947; Dorothy L. Sayers, detective novelist, essayist and translator, Witham, Essex, 1957; Harold Holt, Prime Minister of Australia 1966-67, drowned off Portsea, Victoria, 1967.

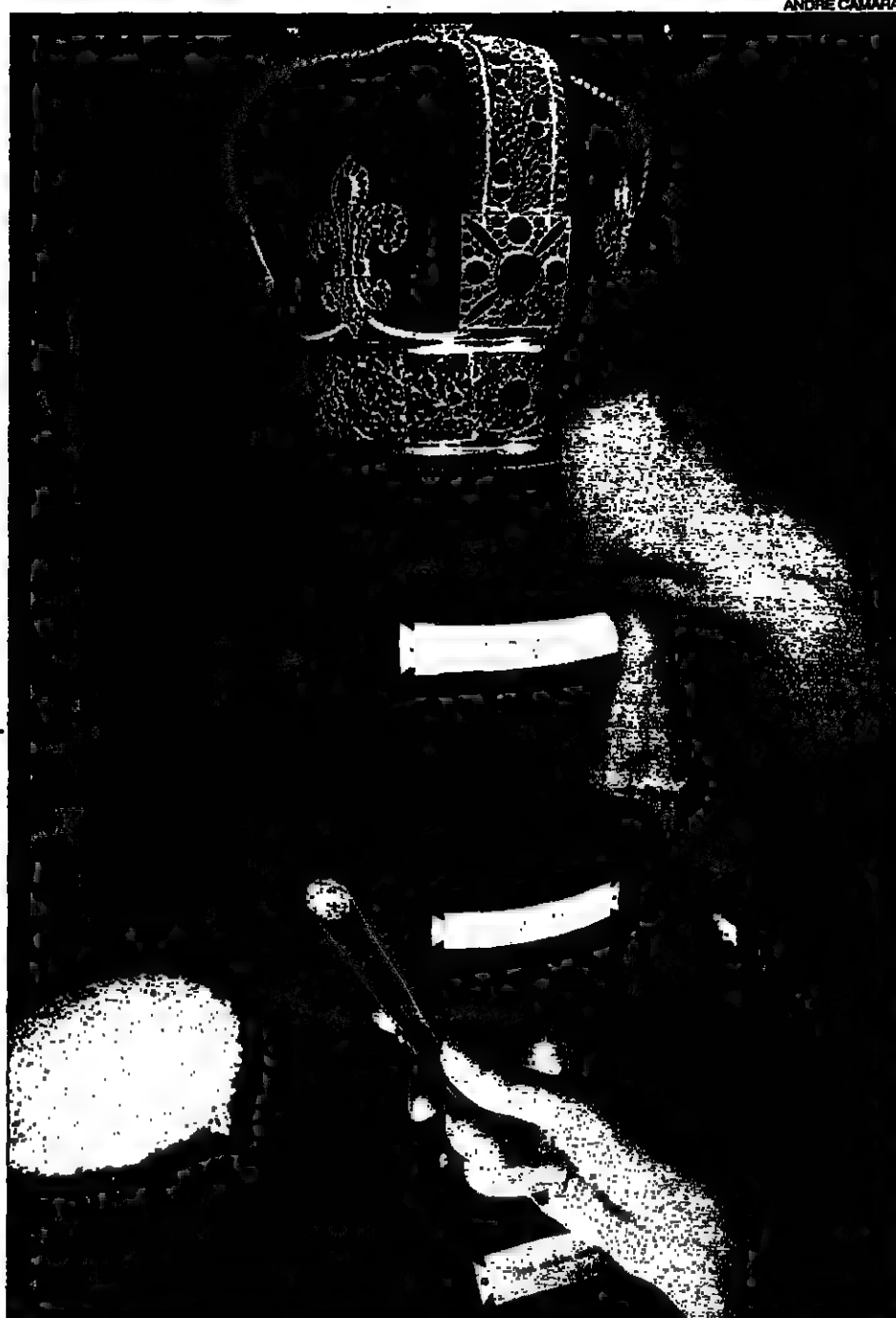
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Sir Michael Spicer, MP, Chairman of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee, was the host at a dinner held last night at the House of Commons after a meeting of the committee at which Mr Ian Taylor, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Science and Technology, was the speaker.

The first powered flight was achieved by the Wright brothers in the Kitty Hawk, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, 1903.



Anna Key, Assistant Curator at the Tower of London, picks out a £200,000 diamond, one of 12,344 lent by De Beers and worth nearly £2.5 million, for 'Crown and Diamonds' a new permanent exhibition at the Tower. Behind Miss Key is the frame of the Coronation Crown of King George IV which was originally set with that number of diamonds. On show for the first time will be a number of royal crown frames recently given to the Royal Collection by Prince Jefri of Brunei. The exhibition will be opened on Thursday by Virginia Bottomley, Heritage Secretary, and open to the public from Friday.

Stone slabs reveal hidden art

BY NORMAN HAMMOND, ARCHAEOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

THE discovery of more spectacular examples of megalithic art at an Irish prehistoric tomb has made it the richest concentration in Europe, according to the excavator, Professor George Eogan. The odd position of the finds also suggests that they may have been reused from an earlier, destroyed tomb.

Six slabs, elaborately decorated with concentric circles and spirals pecked into the rock with stone tools, were found in September at Knowth, in the Boyne Valley north of Dublin (*The Times*, September 28, 1996). "It was only when the stones were removed from their sockets that the extent of the art emerged," Professor Eogan

said. "If they had been erected the other way up, the art would have been clearly visible that raises the question of why the art was hidden. It may have been to meet certain ritual demands, but it is also possible that the stones may have come from an earlier tomb that was demolished."

The stones, reused in a different manner, would have had a different ritual meaning. This suggests that practices changed through time, and that there was a long period of tomb building at Knowth.

Professor Eogan's previous excavations have revealed a neolithic village some 5,000 years old underlying the main tomb mound at Knowth, but

this is the first suggestion that megalithic art may also have an earlier history there.

Knowth now has nearly 300 decorated stones, the greatest number from any passage tomb in Europe, Professor Eogan says. "This one site has more stones than are found in the whole Iberian peninsula and in France."

The western tomb, discovered in 1967 but only recently explored, has more than 70 decorated slabs in its 14ft length, and many of these were hidden by the builders. The east tomb and some of the smaller satellite mounds are also decorated; the main mound at Knowth was large enough to have had a castle built on it in the Middle Ages.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr J.M. Boyden
and **Princess Zahra Aga Khan**
The engagement is announced between Mr. only son of Mr and Mrs Boyden, of England, and Princess Zahra, only daughter of the Aga Khan and Princess Salimah Aga Khan, of France.

Mr A.M.E. Barlow
and **Miss S.L. Chambers**
The engagement is announced between Mr. son of Mr and Mrs Mark Barlow, of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, and Sarah, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Ray Chambers, of Wexham, Cheshire.

Mr B.R. Campbell
and **Miss K.R. Spragg**
The engagement is announced between Benjamin, younger son of Mr and Mrs R.C. Campbell, of Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, and Katie, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs D.C. Spragg, of Calbourne, Isle of Wight.

Mr A.C. Dickens
and **Miss A.E. Talbot**
The engagement is announced between Adam, son of the late Mr and Mrs Harry Dickens, of Gaydon, Hampshire, and Alice Elizabeth, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Talbot, of Cerne Abbas, Dorset.

Mr P.S.J. Heath
and **Miss J.K. Windsor**
The engagement is announced between Peter St John, elder son of Mr and Mrs Jeremy Heath, of Barn Close, Solihull, and Jacqueline, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Wheeler, also of Solihull.

Mr M. Johnson
and **Miss A.C. Dwyer**
The engagement is announced between Christopher, son of Mr and Mrs David Johnson, of Brussels, and Amanda, daughter of Mr and Mrs Nick Duncan, of New Malden, Surrey.

Mr J.M.S. Stokes
and **Miss L.B. Baker**
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80 FOOTBALL GAMES TO BE WON



If your team could be doing better, you can move into the transfer market to improve

☐ All Interactive Team Football transfer queries should be directed to 0171-757 7016. All other inquiries can be made on 01582 488 122.

Player in
Club

Pos	Team	(Player's name)	P
180	Fortuna Sittard	(A. Fink)	26
180	Real Ale Roper	(C Blackwell)	26
180	Net Busters	(D Curzon)	26
180	We Can't Win	(G Knapper)	26
180	CUOK	(G Walish)	26
180	Le Bouef And 2 Veg	(M Sawley)	26
180	Tollied Fire	(E Kirby)	26
180	Real Star Salvaviva	(P Kew)	26
180	Top Banana	(M Bottomley)	26
180	12 Sick Parrots	(T Mayor)	26
180	Bob's Boys 4	(R Calder)	26
180	David Keeps The Goal	(K James)	26
180	Hunter's Mob	(C Hunter)	26
195	Alban Haydon XI	(A Hyman)	26
195	Where's Aneur?	(L Saunders)	26
195	Now We Are Two	(J McKewen)	26
195	Dear Old Things	(J Saunders)	26
195	Ref Is Back To Kill	(R Gohli)	26
195	Dave's Shaves	(D Lightowler)	26
195	Lloydy's Barge	(D Goodwin)	26
195	Paradise Escapes	(S Alford)	26
195	Scottish Points	(J Pmgon)	26
195	Thing Fish	(I Doughty)	26
195	Bothered FC	(D Lee)	26
200	Kelly's Boat	(P Linewry)	26
200	Born Losses	(P Farkins)	26
200	Albion's Feet	(K Simpson)	26
200	Irish's Boat	(L Simpson)	26
200	Gauntlet FC	(J Eldred)	26
200	Iran's Is Team	(J W Donaldson)	26
200	Sports Big Bone	(J Stankiewicz)	26
200	Prosecco	(S Dabie)	26
200	The Three Angles	(P Farrand)	26
200	Lavinton Longball	(M Ward)	26
200	John Hunt Tactica A	(J Hunt)	26
200	No	(R Somerville)	26
210	Celtan's Conquerors	(M Convey)	26
210	Over The Moon FC	(I Fowler)	26
210	Pezuka Anderson	(P Harsh)	26
210	Bladderburners	(P Walters)	26
210	Sixy Times III	(L McCulloch)	26
210	Raiders Warriors	(G Wales)	26
210	Alanya Portage	(V Fernandez)	26
210	Netlles Heroes	(J Fox)	26
220	Borsula Floyd	(B Floyd)	26
220	The Fishers	(N Scott)	26
220	Elstern United	(P Leader)	26
220	Breth GB	(M Burch)	26
220	Turner's Esmeres 6	(P Turner)	26
220	Mobby 23	(J Brown)	26
220	Ash Lee Loafers	(H Hulme)	26
220	Jan 2	(J Clayton)	26
220	Whiffy Town	(K McGilroy)	26
220	Rams 2 Slougher	(J Stankiewicz)	26
220	The Bubbly Eggs	(J Goodman)	26
220	Brinta Maff XI	(L MacAlister)	26
220	—	(Z Whinnett)	26
220	Stalk United 1	(J Funt)	26
220	Dynamo Hibs	(S Miller)	26
220	Too Farr	(M A Kennedy)	26
220	Turner's Esmeres 4	(P Turner)	26
220	Antares	(L Clark)	26
220	Sid In A Carry On	(N James)	26
220	Mobby 20	(J Brown)	26
240	Looney Tunes	(J Skinner)	26
240	Cholm Chib 60	(C Scarf)	26
240	Set Against Cys	(S Shipley)	26
240	Slack Attack	(R Shackleton)	26
240	The Slacks		26

The ITF players, their points and their values if you are considering the transfer option

Code	Name	Team	Pos	Age	Points	Value
10101	M Watt	Aberdeen	1.50	0	-3	
10102	N Walker	Aberdeen	1.00	+4	+2	
10201	D Seaman	Arsenal	5.00	0	+27	
10202	V Berriman	Arsenal	0.75	0	0	
10203	J Lukic	Arsenal	0.75	0	-14	
10301	M Boscovich	Aston Villa	3.50	0	0	
10302	M Oakes	Aston Villa	1.00	0	+19	
10401	T Flowers	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	0	-19	
10402	S Given	Blackburn Rovers	2.00	-1	-1	
10501	G Marshall	Celtic	3.50	0	-1	
10502	S Kerr	Celtic	3.50	0	0	
10601	D Kharine	Chelsea	2.50	0	+10	
10602	K Hitchcock	Chelsea	2.00	0	-20	
10603	F Groves	Chelsea	3.00	-5	-5	
10701	S Ogilvie	Coventry City	1.50	0	-19	
10702	J Fitt	Coventry City	0.50	0	0	
10801	M Taylor	Derby County	1.00	0	0	
10802	R Houtt	Derby County	1.00	0	-10	
10901	A Maxwell	Dundee United	0.50	0	+16	
10902	L Key	Dundee United	0.50	0	-10	
11001	I Westwater	Dunfermline	0.50	-6	-30	
11002	N Southall	Everton	2.50	0	-9	
11103	P Gerrard	Everton	2.50	0	+1	
11201	G Rounis	Hartlepool	1.50	0	-10	
11301	J Leighton	Hibernian	1.50	-4	-7	
11401	D Lekovic	Kilmarnock	1.00	+5	-20	
11501	M Beesley	Leeds United	1.50	0	0	
11502	P Evans	Leeds United	0.25	0	0	
11503	N Martyn	Leeds United	2.50	+4	+8	
11601	K Poole	Leicester City	1.00	0	0	
11603	K Keller	Leicester City	1.00	0	-8	
11701	D James	Liverpool	5.00	-11	+11	
11702	A Warner	Liverpool	0.50	0	0	
11801	P Schmeichel	Manchester United	5.00	0	-18	
11802	R van der Gouw	Manchester United	1.00	0	+5	
11901	G Walsh	Middlesbrough	1.50	-9	-14	
11902	A Miller	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	-19	
12001	S Howie	Motherwell	1.50	0	-19	
12101	S Hislop	Newcastle United	4.00	0	-3	
12102	P Smolac	Newcastle United	3.00	+5	+5	
12201	M Croxley	Nottingham Forest	2.50	+5	-23	
12202	A Fothergill	Nottingham Forest	0.75	0	0	
12203	T Wright	Nottingham Forest	0.75	0	0	
12301	S Thompson	Raith Rovers	0.50	+5	-9	
12401	A Gorman	Rangers	5.00	+2	+7	
12501	K Prasanna	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00	0	+5	
12502	M Clarke	Sheffield Wednesday	0.50	0	0	
12601	D Beasant	Southampton	1.00	0	-16	
12602	N Moss	Southampton	0.25	0	+2	
12603	C Woods	Southampton	1.50	0	-19	
12702	L Perez	Sunderland	0.50	+5	-3	
11803	A Coton	Sunderland	1.00	0	+9	
12801	I Walker	Tottenham Hotspur	3.50	+5	+16	
12802	E Baundson	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0	0	
12901	L Mladkowski	West Ham United	2.00	0	-16	
12902	S Manton	West Ham United	0.50	0	+5	
13001	N Sullivan	Wimbledon	1.00	+5	+12	
13002	P Heald	Wimbledon	1.00	0	0	

20101	S McKinnell	Aberdeen	2.00	+4 +11
20201	L Dixon	Arsenal	3.00	0 +20
20202	N Winterburn	Arsenal	3.00	0 +17
20303	S Morrow	Arsenal	1.00	0 +4
20301	S Stannett	Aston Villa	3.00	0 +24
20302	A Wright	Aston Villa	3.00	0 +28
20303	G Charles	Aston Villa	2.50	0 0
20304	P King	Aston Villa	0.25	0 0
20305	F Nelson	Aston Villa	3.00	0 +24
20401	H Berg	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	0 -3
20402	G Le Saux	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	0 +1
20403	J Kenna	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	0 -4
20404	G Croft	Blackburn Rovers	1.50	0 +2
20501	S Williams	Celtic	3.00	0 +2
20502	T McKinlay	Celtic	3.00	0 -2
20601	D Petruscu	Chelsea	3.00	0 +5
20602	S Clarke	Chelsea	2.00	-3 -2
20603	T Phelan	Chelsea	2.00	0 0
20604	S Minto	Chelsea	1.00	-2 +1
20701	D Burrows	Coventry City	1.50	0 -7
20703	B Barnes	Coventry City	1.00	0 -5
20704	M Hall	Coventry City	1.00	0 +4
20705	R Gennett	Coventry City	1.50	0 -2
20801	C Powell	Derby County	1.50	0 +3
20802	D Yates	Derby County	1.00	0 +2
20804	P Parker	Derby County	1.00	0 +4
20901	M Milnes	Dundee United	1.00	+3 +16
20902	C Miller	Dundee United	0.50	+1 +8
20903	N Duffy	Dundee United	0.50	0 +7
21001	C Maitland	Dunfermline	0.25	0 -8
21002	A Tod	Dunfermline	0.25	-2 -9
21101	M Hotteliff	Everton	2.50	0 0
21102	A Hinchcliffe	Everton	2.00	0 +9
21103	E Barrett	Everton	1.50	0 +8
21104	M Jackson	Everton	2.00	0 0
21201	G Locke	Hartlepool	1.50	0 0
21202	N Poulton	Hartlepool	1.00	-2 -2
21301	W Miller	Hibernian	1.00	-4 +2
21302	A Dow	Hibernian	1.00	-1 +12
21402	G MacPherson	Kilmarnock	0.50	+4 +10
21501	G Kelly	Leeds United	3.00	+4 +17
21502	A Dorog	Leeds United	0.50	0 -6
21503	P Beesley	Leeds United	0.50	+3 +11
21601	M Williams	Leicester City	0.50	0 +6
21602	S Grayson	Leicester City	0.50	0 +8
21603	N Lewis	Leicester City	0.50	0 -2
21604	F Roling	Leicester City	0.25	0 0
21701	R Jones	Liverpool	3.00	0 0
21702	S Harrison	Liverpool	1.50	0 +1
21703	S Bjornby	Liverpool	0.25	0 0
21704	C Charnock	Liverpool	0.25	0 0
21801	D Innes	Manchester United	4.00	0 +12
21802	G Neville	Manchester United	3.00	0 +9
21803	P Neville	Manchester United	3.00	0 -2
21901	N Cox	Middlesbrough	2.50	-4 -11
21903	C Morris	Middlesbrough	0.75	0 -5
21904	C Fleming	Middlesbrough	0.25	0 0
22001	S Blackmore	Middlesbrough	0.25	0 0
22002	S McKinnell	Motherwell	0.50	+4 +5
22101	W Barton	Newcastle United	3.00	0 -1
22102	S Watson	Newcastle United	3.00	+4 +14
22103	R Elliott	Newcastle United	2.50	0 +3
22104	J Berrisford	Newcastle United	2.50	0 +7
22201	S Pearce	Nottingham Forest	4.00	+3 +2
22202	N Lytle	Nottingham Forest	2.00	+4 +4
22203	A1 Hasland	Nottingham Forest	1.00	+4 +4
22204	N Jerkin	Nottingham Forest	2.00	0 +1
22301	P Bonar	Raith Rovers	0.75	0 -5
22302	D Kirkwood	Raith Rovers	0.50	0 -5
22401	D Robertson	Rangers	2.00	0 0
22402	J Brown	Rangers	1.50	0 +12
22501	I Nolan	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0 +18
22502	P Atkinson	Sheffield Wednesday	1.00	0 0
22503	S Nicol	Sheffield Wednesday	1.00	0 +5
22504	D Stefanovic	Sheffield Wednesday	0.50	0 0
22505	L Bryce	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0 -5
22601	J Dodd	Southampton	0.75	0 -6
22602	F Benali	Southampton	0.75	0 0
22603	S Churton	Southampton	0.50	+4 +13
22701	D Kubold	Sunderland	0.50	0 +4
22702	M Scott	Sunderland	0.25	+4 +3
22703	G Hall	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00	0 0
22801	D Austin	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00	+4 +23
22802	C Wilson	Tottenham Hotspur	1.00	0 +12
22803	J Edinburgh	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0 0
22804	D Kerslake	Tottenham Hotspur	1.00	+4 +4
22805	S Carr	Tottenham Hotspur	4.00	0 +12
22901	J Dicks	West Ham United	1.00	0 +4
22902	T Breacker	West Ham United	1.00	0 +3
22903	K Rowland	West Ham United	1.00	0 +2
22904	M Bowen	West Ham United	0.50	0 0
22905	K Brown	Wimbledon	1.50	0 +9
23001	B Thatcher	Wimbledon	0.75	+4 +8
23002	A Kinble	Wimbledon	0.75	+4 +16
23003	C Cunningham	Wimbledon	0.75	0 0
23004	D Jaup	Wimbledon	0.25	+4 +21
23006	C Perry	Wimbledon	0.25	+4 +21

Code	Name	Team	Pos	Age	Points	Value
30101	B Irvine	Aberdeen	2.00	+4 +12		
30102	C Woodthorpe	Aberdeen	1.50	0 -3		
30201	A Adams	Arsenal	4.00	0 +16		
30202	S Bould	Arsenal	3.00	0 +19		
30203	M Keown	Arsenal	3.00	0 +20		
30301	A Ungham	Arsenal	1.00	0 +9		



Kelly, the Sunderland No 16, performs acrobatics during the match against Chelsea. But it will not boost his ITF rating

					Pos	Age
						Val. £000
30205	S Marshall	Arsenal	1.00	0	0	
30301	G Southgate	Aston Villa	3.50	0	+16	
30302	U Ehiogu	Aston Villa	3.00	0	+33	
30304	C Tiler	Aston Villa	1.00	0	+9	
30305	R Schmechel	Aston Villa	1.00	0	+13	
30401	C Hendry	Blackburn Rovers	4.00	0	+1	
30402	I Pearce	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	0	
30403	C Coleman	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	-3	
30404	N Markov	Blackburn Rovers	0.50	0	+2	
30501	T Boyd	Celtic	3.00	0	+10	
30502	M McKay	Celtic	1.50	0	+2	
30503	A Stubbs	Celtic	3.50	0	+9	
30504	B O'Neill	Celtic	3.00	0	+1	
30601	M Dugher	Chelsea	2.50	-3	-8	
30602	F Leboeuf	Chelsea	2.50	+13	+3	
30603	F Sinclair	Chelsea	2.00	-2	-2	
30604	D Lee	Chelsea	2.00	0	+3	
30605	A Myers	Chelsea	1.50	-1	+5	
30606	E Johnson	Chelsea	1.50	0	+19	
30701	L Walsh	Coventry City	2.00	0	0	
30702	R Shaw	Coventry City	1.50	0	-1	
30801	I Stinuac	Derby County	2.50	0	0	
30802	D Westall	Derby County	1.00	0	0	
30803	P McGrath	Derby County	2.50	0	+1	
30804	J Lawrence	Derby County	1.00	0	+8	
30805	M Carbone	Derby County	0.50	0	-1	
30901	S Freeman	Dunfermline	3.00	0	+4+14	
31001	M Miller	Dunfermline	0.75	+1	+1	
31002	I Den Bieman	Dunfermline	0.75	0	0	
31102	D Unsworth	Everton	2.50	0	0	
31102	D Watson	Everton	2.50	0	+2	
31103	C Short	Everton	2.00	0	0	
31201	D McPherson	Hartle	1.00	0	+8	
31202	P Ritchie	Hartle	1.00	0	+15	
31301	J McLaughlin	Hibernian	0.50	0	-4	
30902	B Walsh	Hibernian	0.75	0	+9	
31302	G Hunter	Hibernian	0.50	-1	+7	
31401	M Rolly	Kilmarnock	1.00	-4	-2	
31402	R Montgomery	Kilmarnock	0.75	+4	-1	
31501	D Wetherall	Leeds United	2.50	0	+15	
31502	R Johnson	Leeds United	1.00	0	+2	
31503	L Lewis	Leeds United	1.00	+4	+12	
31504	J Pennington	Leeds United	0.50	0	0	
31601	S Walsh	Leicester City	1.00	0	+6	
31602	J Watts	Leicester City	1.00	0	+9	
31603	P Karmark	Leicester City	0.50	0	0	
31604	S Prior	Leicester City	1.00	0	+7	
31701	P Balby	Liverpool	3.50	0	+18	
31702	J Scates	Liverpool	3.50	0	0	
31703	M Wright	Liverpool	3.00	0	+15	
31704	N Ruddock	Liverpool	3.00	0	+11	
31705	D Maitland	Liverpool	1.00	0	+14	
31801	G Pallister	Manchester United	3.50	0	+10	
31802	D May	Manchester United	3.00	0	+10	
31803	R Johnson	Manchester United	2.50	0	0	
31901	N Pearson	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	-9	
31902	S Williams	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	-7	
31903	D Whyte	Middlesbrough	1.50	-4	-13	
31904	P Whelan	Middlesbrough	0.75	-4	-4	
32001	M Martin	Motherwell	1.50	+3	0	
32002	M van der Gaag	Motherwell	0.75	0	+11	
32101	P Albert	Newcastle United	4.50	+4	+17	
32102	S Hovey	Newcastle United	3.00	0	+7	
32103	D Peacock	Newcastle United	3.00	+4	+14	
32201	C Cooper	Nottingham Forest	3.00	+4	0	
32202	S Chettle	Nottingham Forest	2.50	+4	+2	
32203	S Blatherwick	Nottingham Forest	1.00	0	-3	
32301	S Darnley	Raith Rovers	1.00	-19	-19	
32401	R Gough	Rangers	3.50	+2	+28	
32402	A McLean	Rangers	3.50	0	0	
32403	J Bjornlund	Rangers	0.50	0	+17	
32404	G Peirce	Rangers	2.50	0	+14	
32501	J Wainwright	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00	0	+6	
32502	D Walker	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0	+17	
32503	C Unsworth	Sheffield Wednesday	0.25	0	0	
32601	K Monroux	Southampton	1.50	0	-4	
32602	A Neilson	Southampton	1.00	0	-2	
32603	R Dryden	Southampton	0.50	0	-11	
32604	C Lundekvam	Southampton	0.50	0	-3	
32605	U van Goebel	Southampton	1.50	0	-17	
32701	A Swift	Sunderland	1.50	+4	+18	
32702	E Ball	Sunderland	1.00	+6	+14	
32703	R Ford	Sunderland	0.50	+4	+14	
32801	S Campbell	Tottenham Hotspur	2.50	+4	+23	
32802	C Calderwood	Tottenham Hotspur	2.50	+4	+20	
32803	G Malby	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00	0	0	
32804	S Hogg	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0	0	
32805	S Nethercott	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0	0	
32901	S Bittie	West Ham United	2.50	0	+5	
32902	M Rieper	West Ham United	2.50	0	0	
32903	S Potts	West Ham United	2.00	0	-3	
32904	R Hedi	West Ham United	1.50	0	0	
32905	R Ferdinand	West Ham United	0.50	0	0	
33001	A Rennie	Wimbledon	1.00	0	0	
33003	S Pearce	Wimbledon	0.75	0	0	
33004	D Blackwell	Wimbledon	0.50	+4	+8	
33005	B McAllister	Wimbledon	0.50	+12	+2	
33006	S Fitzgerald	Wimbledon	0.25	0	0	

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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

TUESDAY DECEMBER 17 1996

FT-SE blow to Halifax shareholders

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

MILLIONS of Halifax Building Society members could see the value of their new shares drop after conversion next June if a proposal to delay its entry into the Stock Exchange goes ahead.

With an estimated market value of £10 billion, the Halifax is equivalent to more than 1 per cent of market value of the FT-SE 100 index and would normally qualify for fast entry into the index.

Fast entry was devised by a committee of actuaries in the 1980s to get the large private

sector stocks such as British Telecom and British Gas included in the main stock market indices as quickly as possible after flotation.

However, unlike the privatisations the Halifax conversion will offer shares only to its 9 million members. No shares are to be placed with the big institutional investors.

The FT-SE Actuaries UK Indices Committee, which reviews the FT-SE 100 and FT-SE All-Share indices, believes the lack of an institutional placing could distort the market and is considering a delay of up to three weeks before the Halifax joins the FT-SE 100.

Steven Vale, secretary to the FT-SE Actuaries Committee, said: "There will be no distribution to institutions."

"If we put it in on the first day institutions would not be able to get their hands on the stock which will cause a distortion in the market if the stock gets an artificially high price."

"The whole point of the indices is that they are supposed to be a realistic measurement of how fund managers perform."

Peter Butler of the pension fund manager Hermes said institutions would need time to build up their usual 60 per cent combined stake in stocks.

However, City analysts fear this could mean tracker funds, which automatically buy shares in all FT-SE 100 constituents, would avoid Halifax in the early days of its float, thereby artificially depressing its price. This in turn would mean a lower price for those small shareholders selling out in the early days of the flotation. Many small shareholders will be tempted to

cash in immediately on the windfall profits from floating off the building society on the stock market.

Up to 900,000 Halifax savers are expected to sell their shares in the first week. The exclusion of the trackers, which buy 15 per cent of the market, it is feared could worsen any decline in price for private investors.

Some analysts think the FT-SE Actuaries has exaggerated its case as the early sellers should provide two-thirds of institutional needs almost immediately.

When the Abbey National floated in July 1989 its share price tumbled 8p from 153p in its first days of trading. It is now over £7.

One City analyst said: "Many institutions would prefer for it to be delayed although private investors could be disadvantaged in the early days."

However, the Halifax took a relaxed view saying institutional investors would slowly build up their stakes as the company's entry into the indices was inevitable.

A spokesman said: "It is a technical issue to do with managing a unique issue."

The Abbey National did not see how unfulfilled institutional demand could be a problem.

Stephen Tanner, of the Institutional Fund Managers Association, said: "It seems an odd idea. We all know it is going into the index; it's all a matter of when. In practice the share price should benefit before it goes into the index."

Mr Vale said the committee would welcome comments from Halifax members.

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Lord Saatchi, left, and Peter Wilson, chairman of Gallahers, yesterday, after the tobacco group handed over the management of sponsorship by its Benson & Hedges brand to M&C Saatchi, the advertising agency founded less than two years ago by Lord Saatchi and his brother Charles. B&H recently pledged to spend £10 million a year on the Jordan Formula One racing team, currently trying to sign Nigel Mansell, former Formula One champion, on a £7 million deal. M&C is setting up a sponsorship side that will concentrate on sports, broadcasting and the arts. Other clients it hopes to win include Gallahers' Silk Cut.

Bass in £400m Holiday Inns deal

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

BASS, the brewing and leisure group, is selling 47 of its Holiday Inn hotels in America to Bristol Hotels Group of the US. The £400 million deal is part Bass's strategy to franchise hotels rather than own them outright.

In return, Bass will take a shareholding of 36.1 per cent in Bristol, which will become the largest hotel operator in America. Bass is also selling management contracts for another 14 hotels to Bristol and will receive \$91 million in cash and will retire \$300 million in debt.

The deal will more than double the size of the American company, which will become the largest Holiday Inns franchisee in the world. It will control 84 of the hotels, including Holiday Inn Select and Crowne Plaza hotels.

A Bass spokesman said: "Bristol has a strong management team and they already franchise from us, so we decided to stay with them."

American hotels contributed 500 million to the company's operating profits in the year to September. However, the figure also includes hotels managed but not owned by Bass. It is not clear how much the company's own hotels contributed.

Bass is planning to invest \$100 million in its Holiday Inn network in Europe, Asia or Africa. Its progress in developing the chain in those areas has been slower than in the US, where it has more than 1,600 hotels under franchise. It continues to own 20 hotels in America and has no immediate plans to sell them.

Bass said: "We have always seen franchising as our primary business. Owning and managing hotels is simply a means of supporting that operation."

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BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES	
FTSE 100	3993.8 (+21.4)
Yield	3.59%
FTSE All share	1955.20 (+8.03)
Nickel	20422.04 (+80.65)
New York	
Dow Jones	6337.55 (+32.68)
S&P Composite	729.92 (+1.28)
US BATH	
Federal Funds	5 1/4% (5 1/4%)
Long Bond	98 1/2% (99 1/2%)
Yield	6.60% (6.57%)
LONDON MONEY	
3-mth Interbank	6 1/4% (6 1/4%)
Life long gilt	108 1/4% (108 1/4%)
STERLING	
New York	1.6627* (1.6582)
London	1.6619 (1.6581)
DM	2.3816 (2.3829)
FF	8.7122 (8.6581)
Sfr	1.3273* (1.3245)
Yen	114.18* (113.58)
£ index	169.33 (168.70)
¥ index	88.7 (88.1)
DOLLAR	
London	1.6630* (1.6543)
DM	2.3811* (2.3829)
FF	8.7122 (8.6581)
Sfr	1.3273* (1.3245)
Yen	114.18* (113.58)
£ index	169.33 (168.70)
¥ index	88.7 (88.1)
Tokyo close Yen 113.83	
RECENTLY ISSUED	
Event 15-day (Feb)	\$25.85 (\$22.90)
GOLD	
London close	\$367.56 (\$366.65)
* denotes midday trading price	

Better recipe

New-look stores and a recovery in consumer confidence combined to propel profits at MFI, Britain's largest kitchen and bedroom furniture group, 63 per cent higher in the first half.

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Blue skies

The \$13.3 billion takeover of McDonnell Douglas by Boeing, the world's largest aircraft manufacturer, is almost certain to receive American Government approval as early as this summer.

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House prices tipped to rise 10%

By SARA MCCONNELL AND RACHEL KELLY

HOUSE prices are set to rise 10 per cent next year and a further 10 per cent in 1998, UBS, the banking group, predicts. This would push price gains into double figures for the first time since 1989.

Publishing his latest housing market report, Rob Thomas, UBS housing analyst, declared: "The gloom of the 1990s housing recession has finally been shaken off."

Rising prices will release more people from the negative equity trap, which will in turn bring more homes into the market, Mr Thomas said. UBS estimates that the number of people with mortgages worth more than the value of their homes will fall from 500,000 at the end of 1996 to 90,000 by the end of 1997.

Mr Thomas predicts that turnover of properties will rise to 1.4 million in 1997 and 1.6 million in 1998. He played down fears that a housing recovery could escalate into a 1980s-style speculative boom. "With housing seriously undervalued by any historical comparison the market's new-found confidence will fuel a rapid catching up period. There is a danger that this... will rekindle speculative buying... but in the absence of a seriously overheating economy we give this scenario a low probability."

He believes mortgage rate rises will be small, peaking at an annual average of 5.3 per cent in 1998.

The Cheltenham & Gloucester, the fourth largest mortgage lender, has raised its standard variable rate from 6.85 per cent to 6.94 per cent, with effect from January 1.

RBS executive nets £2m bonus

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

LAWRENCE FISH, the chairman of Royal Bank of Scotland's US subsidiary, Citizens Financial Group, has netted £2 million in bonuses since its merger with First NH Bank in April.

According to RBS's annual report, published yesterday, the payment to Mr Fish doubled the amount paid in bonuses to eight executive directors to £2.4 million in 1996.

In addition to a £442,000 basic salary, Mr Fish, 52, was paid £100,000 in benefits, bringing his total package to £2.57 million. This was more than £1 million in excess of last year's payments, when Mr Fish, on £1.54 million, was also the highest-paid executive in RBS.

RBS headhunted Mr Fish to run Citizens three years ago. His remuneration dwarfs that of Lord Younger of Prestwick,

chairman of RBS, who received £225,000 this year. George Mathewson, chief executive, received a £121,000 bonus, lifting his total remuneration to £557,000, from £485,000 in the previous year.

RBS said that Mr Fish's remuneration was in line with comparable executives in America and was well deserved because Citizens' profits, after provisions, had risen by 57 per cent, to £168 million, this year after the merger deal with First NH Bank.

In the year to September 30, RBS increased pre-tax profits to £695 million, from £502 million. There was a net exceptional profit of £51 million, made up of a £72 million profit on a German disposal, partly offset by restructuring costs of £21 million relating to the merger of Citizens and First NH Bank.

Tabor leads coup at West Ham

By JASON NISSE

A FORMER bookmaker and racehorse owner, who had a lifetime ban from the Jockey Club overturned on appeal in 1973, will today launch an attempt to oust the chairman of West Ham United and take control of the troubled Premiership football club.

Representatives of Michael Tabor, who sold his Arthur Prince bookmaking business to Coral for £30 million last year and now lives in tax exile in Monaco, will stand up at today's annual meeting of the club and propose that shareholders reject the re-election of Terence Brown, the club's chairman. They will propose that Henry Montlake, an Essex lawyer representing Mr Tabor, is elected instead.

Although even Mr Tabor's camp admit this move has little chance of success as Mr Brown claims backing from holders of

90 per cent of West Ham's shares. It is a first attempt by him to take control of West Ham, whose unquoted shares have a market value of about £25 million.

Mr Montlake has written to shareholders saying that Mr Tabor, a lifelong West Ham fan, is willing to put money for rebuilding the club's ground at Upton Park and buying new players.

The letter says Mr Tabor has funds available immediately. In the past he has shown no shortage of wealth, being a leading racehorse owner, boasting Thunder Gulch, the 1995 Kentucky Derby winner and the most expensive yearling in Britain at \$800,000 guineas in his stable.

A lifetime ban imposed on him in 1970 by the Jockey Club for allegedly fixing races was overturned three years later.

Power failure halts Lloyds cashpoints

By CAROLINE MERRELL



THOUSANDS of Lloyds TSB Bank customers had their Christmas shopping plans thwarted yesterday by a massive computer failure that meant that all its 2,400 cashpoint machines were out of action for several hours.

The problem was caused by power failure at the bank's central computer in Peterborough. The chaos follows an initiative by the banks to try to integrate the various cash machine networks.

Customers were not only unable to get cash, but were also unable to get information about balances in their accounts. The bank said that it had deployed all

possible resources on trying to sort out the problem, but, by early evening, it had still not managed to get the computer working.

Ironically, the problem affected only the seven million customers with Lloyds. The seven million former TSB customers who became Lloyds customers when TSB was taken over last year were able to use their cash cards. The failure of the system, which is on the Four Banks computer network, is bound to annoy many shoppers in a year in which record levels of spending are forecast.

Link, the biggest cash machine network in the UK, experienced

record cash withdrawals in the first week of December. It claims that withdrawals are up by 30 per cent on last year, with an extra £50 million withdrawn in the first week of December. John Hardy, Link chief executive, said: "We have seen a dramatic increase in both cash withdrawals and transactions. It looks as if people are feeling the Christmas spirit earlier than they did last year."

Britain's retailers expect this Christmas to be a bumper one for spending. A recent survey forecast spending of £23.5 billion on presents, food and drink — £700 million up on last year.

Plans are afoot to integrate cashpoint networks

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□ Saunders awaits Euro ruling □ Mathematics behind insurance mergers □ Defeat for Myerson and Tregor

Pleading in deadly Ernest

THE judgment that the European Court of Human Rights is threatening to hand down today is a bad one through and through, and far more damaging than any petty row over a smacked 12-year-old. The court is contemplating the restoration of Ernest Saunders's reputation.

Since his 1990 conviction for theft and other offences, Mr Saunders has stage-managed a rehabilitation of that reputation even more miraculously, in its own way, than the sudden lifting of the mental problems that once plagued him. It is the culmination of an extraordinary, often single-handed, public relations campaign.

Outside the City, he is now seen as a lone banner against injustice, the little man against the system. This is a view that might surprise those who knew the man in his heyday. "Deadly Ernest" the put-upon victim? The man who conspired with a few chums to steal millions now a political prisoner?

Part of the problem is that the Guinness fraud, to the uninitiated, looks like the perfect victimless crime, one bunch of rich plutocrats outdoing another bunch, a few figures manipulated on a screen and no one worse off. This is quite untrue. By artificially raising the Guinness share price, they bought Distillers on the cheap,

so depriving any investor in the latter of some of the value of the holding. As Distillers was one of the most widely held stocks at the time, this means virtually anyone with a pension lost out, if only marginally. It is a classic example of how to make a packet by robbing large numbers of people of extremely small amounts of money. No wonder the backhanders paid to that little cartel totalled £25 million.

Mr Saunders's appeal to the court will be decided today. He claims the questioning he underwent by Department of Trade and Industry inspectors amounted to forced self-incrimination, contrary to the established legal principle of a right to silence. The inspectors, under the 1985 Companies Act, can request answers to their questions on pain of up to two years' imprisonment. This evidence can then be used by the prosecution.

There is one plain reason why Mr Saunders's case should fail. We expect a higher standard of behaviour from those whom we charge to look after our money, a fact implicit in all the regulatory

paraphernalia of finance. Directors should be no different from other investment advisers, no matter in whose interests they are charged to act.

Consider these questions. In the battle between the fraudster and the prosecuting authorities, which side is, on the available criminal case history, operating at a disadvantage? And are the laws and regulations as they stand, post-Maxwell, post-BCCI, post all the other scandals, strong enough to protect all investors? And do they need weakening further at the behest of a European court, and on behalf of Ernest Saunders?

Brokering the perfect deal

HOWEVER good the deal may look on paper, the real trick in merging two insurance companies is persuading the staff to work with each other. Insurers are people businesses, and their cultures are often strikingly different. This is why, in spite of talk of consolidation, brokers have been cautious in seeking



out potential partners. Put together two multimillion people businesses and see half the staff walk out, and you are back where you started, only poorer. Yet the consolidation is driven by the same mathematics that brought about the more high-profile links between Royal and Sun Alliance and Refuge and United Friendly — and the flirting between Commercial Union and BAT. Insurance brokers, like their brethren further up the food chain, are having to cope with falling margins and slow revenue growth. North America and the UK are horribly competitive and there is no sign of a recovery. Many brokers have the additional cost of contribut-

ing towards the Lloyd's of London reconstruction plan.

People companies have high running expenses, which is why mergers look so tempting: computer systems harmonised, offices sold — and mass sackings all round, and Merry Christmas to the lot of you. Worldwide, the sector is already consolidating; only last week the merger between two US insurers, Aon Corporation and Alexander and Alexander Services, created the world's largest broker. Further deals are expected, with Marsh & McLennan of the US thought to be about to buy Miner.

This puts pressure on smaller brokers who are not big enough to compete. Speculation has surrounded Willis Corroon and Sedgwick, the UK's two biggest. Both have high expenses relative to turnover and some in the industry believe that they should merge and embark on, yes, that rigorous cost-cutting.

In such a climate, the merger of JIB and Lloyd Thompson could bear fruit for both. The new company becomes the third-biggest broker in the UK, with strengths in a number of niche markets.

Shares in fellow brokers were up again yesterday; clearly the market believes this is far from being the last big deal in the sector.

Seeking value in strange places

ANOTHER day, another defeat for Brian Myerson and Julian Tregor and their UK Active Value fund. Just whose value they are actively promoting and by how much is never quite clear — registration in the British Virgin Islands tends to see to that. But Kenwood shareholders have little to thank the duo for.

Myerson and Tregor are self-styled corporate governance guerrillas, who claim to go into underperforming companies and take them apart, using strategic stakes as their lever. Their record is mixed, and their involvement in the affairs of Kenwood suffered a strong rebuff yesterday, more than 90 per cent of the other shareholders backing the board.

As has been the case before, it is not too clear what UK Active was trying to achieve. The idea

was to put Kenwood up for sale — but how? Any quoted company is for sale; all it needs is a buyer and the willingness of the owners, the investors, to sell. There is a buyer, in the shape of Pifco, a rather more successful maker of kitchen appliances. Pifco has been in talks with Kenwood since July at least, from which one may assume that these are not now going to reach a friendly conclusion.

There is nothing UK Active can do to force an agreement. The Kenwood board now has a few months' grace, ahead of full-year figures that should give a clearer indication of the finances. Alternatively, Pifco could always try a hostile bid.

Halifax solution

THERE is an easy solution to the technical dilemma that has kept the Halifax out of the various City indices. The authorities are concerned that a scramble for stock by institutions might send the price soaring — and, presumably, offer private sellers an unacceptable premium. The Halifax should introduce a "revolving door", easy sale facility for those of its nine million members who want cash up front. The society avoids the expense of servicing a huge register of investors, and the City gets its shares at once.

Repackaged stores help MFI to advance 63%

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM AND CHRIS AYRES

NEW-LOOK stores and a recovery in consumer confidence combined to propel profits at MFI, Britain's largest kitchen and bedroom furniture group, 63 per cent higher in the first half.

In the six months ending November 9 pre-tax profits were £32.7 million, compared with £20.1 million a year ago. John Randall, chief executive, said that in MFI's view the

housing market remains dormant. He said the 13.5 per cent like-for-like sales growth was instead thanks to improved consumer confidence and the new format MFI Homeworks stores, which are replacing traditional MFI outlets.

The converted stores have a broader range of goods on offer, wider aisles and natural lighting. A total of 78 out of MFI's 184 UK-stores are now

trading as MFI Homeworks, with another 40 conversions planned for next year.

Homeworks stores are smaller, and the conversions have allowed MFI to sub-lease 130,000 square feet of retailing space. The group is currently negotiating with tenants to increase this to 300,000 square feet by the end of the year. If all the space is leased, it will give annual savings of up to £4

million. Derek Hunt, chairman, said the sub-lease programme allows the company to hedge against future rent rises and takes advantage of the high demand for out-of-town and edge-of-town sites created by restrictive planning regulations.

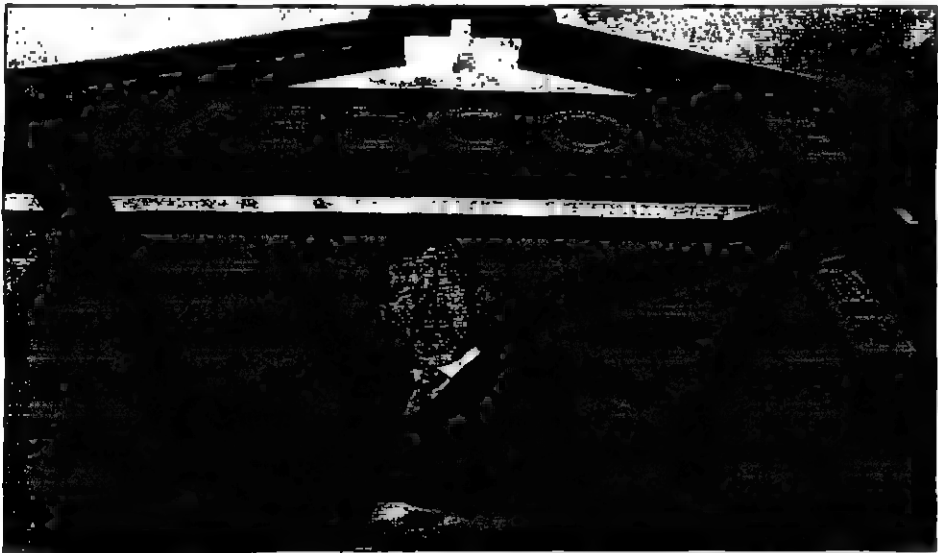
MFI will also be heavily investing in Howden Joinery, the builders' warehouse chain, which now has 24 depots. This number is set to double by the end of the next financial year, with new depots planned for the Midlands and the South of England.

Mr Hunt said MFI had benefited from the strength of the pound, which had pushed down the cost of raw materials in Europe. In the first half, like-for-like sales in the French stores were 11 per cent ahead but trade there is now being hampered by difficult market conditions.

The company is to open a handful of new outlets in Spain, where it currently has three small stores.

Earnings per share rose 62 per cent to 3.85p and the interim dividend has been increased to 1.7p. It is payable on February 7.

Tempos, page 24



John Randall puts MFI's success down to consumer confidence and a new format

Gibbs Mew shares hit by fall in profits

SHARES of Gibbs Mew fell 89p yesterday, to 210p, after the pub operator and brewer disclosed a sharp decline in first-half profits, and gave a warning to investors that second-half profits would also fall short of expectations (Martin Barrow writes).

The company, based in Salisbury, Wiltshire, said that pre-tax profits fell to £960,000 before tax, from £2.52 million, in the 24 weeks to September 14. Earnings fell to 5.25p a share, from 14.59p. The interim dividend is held at 4p a share. Profits were affected by a £470,000 charge against the cost of closing the offices of Centric, a Midlands pub group acquired in 1994, while launching new brands and "continuing competitive pressures" also applied the squeeze.

JIB agrees £300m insurance merger

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

LOYD THOMPSON and JIB Group, the commercial insurance brokers, have announced plans to merge, forming the third-largest broker in the UK (See Pennington, this page).

The new company, to be known as Jardine Lloyd Thompson Group, will have a market capitalisation of almost £300 million and combined profits of around £38 million. Only Willis Corroon and Sedgwick will be larger.

The City responded positively, and shares in JIB rose 21p, to 130p, while Lloyd Thompson rose 12p, to 174p.

Attention also turned to Willis and Sedgwick, with brokers speculating that they might be forced to take defensive action, perhaps in the form of a merger. Shares of Willis rose 4p, to 135p, and Sedgwick by 5p, to 132p.

Speculation also pushed up the price of Commercial Union shares, which was rumoured last week to have considered a deal with BAT Industries.

JIB shareholders will be offered four new Lloyd Thompson shares for every five JIB shares held under the terms of the merger, which is expected to take place in February. Lloyd Thompson shareholders will hold approximately 43 per cent and JIB shareholders approximately 57 per cent of the share capital of the new company.

Lloyd Thompson specialises in the UK, European and Bermudan markets, while JIB operates in 30 countries worldwide. Lloyd Thompson said that it intended to pay a special dividend of 6p net per Lloyd Thompson share, subject to the merger going ahead.

Newman Tonks rises after offer

RIVAL bidders are circling Newman Tonks, the building materials group, which has already turned down a tentative offer for the company from FKI, the engineering group (Carl Mortished writes).

Shares in Newman Tonks surged from 102p to 129p yesterday as the stock market reacted to news of FKI's approach. FKI approached Newman Tonks last week with indications that it would be prepared to make a cash offer of 134p per share.

The Newman Tonks board believes the indicative price is insufficient but FKI may offer a higher price. At 134p, a bid would value the company at £171 million. Other parties are believed to be interested in the group. Tempos, page 24

Levitt fails to show for court

A warrant was issued yesterday for the arrest of Roger Levitt, the disgraced former life and pensions salesman, after he failed to attend court to answer a charge of breaking a ban on acting as a director. Mr Levitt, banned for seven years in 1993 after pleading guilty to misleading financial regulators, had been accused of taking on a shadow directorship of International Boxing Corporation (IBC).

Hemsley ahead

Raphael Zorn Hemsley, the broker, lifted pre-tax profits to £746,208 (£235,000) in the year to September 30. Earnings were 4.1p a share (1.5p). RZH plans to acquire Insurance Analysts, a Lloyd's adviser, in exchange for the issue of 1.7 million ordinary shares, worth around £1.4 million.

ASW disposal

ASW, the steel stockholding company, is raising £33 million through the sale of AML, its metal recycling operations, to Philip Environmental, the Canadian industrial services company. The sale is subject to shareholder approval.

Prism Rail in £11m cash call

By MARTIN BARROW

PRISM RAIL, which owns more privatised train franchises than any other company, is raising £11.2 million through a rights issue.

The proceeds will be used to part-fund the £19 million capital requirement laid down by the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising. Prism secured the West Anglia Great Northern (WAGN) franchise this month.

The company is offering five new shares for every 28 held at 330p each. Existing shares fell 5p to 445p yesterday. The shares were issued at 100p this year.

Prism, based in Keighley, West Yorkshire, has won four franchises — WAGN, LTS Rail, South Wales & West Railway (SWW) and Cardiff

Railway Company (CRC) — and is shortlisted for two more, North West Regional Railways and Scotrail.

Yesterday, Prism reported financial results for the 36 weeks to August 17, showing a pre-tax loss of £336,000, mainly reflecting the cost of bidding for franchises. The results included 20 weeks of trading at LTS Rail, the first franchise it won, covering the former London, Tilbury & Southend line.

Godfrey Burley, chairman of Prism, said: "Prism already has a substantial and viable business. The board looks forward to the challenge of implementing its business plans for the four franchises which it has been awarded to date."

Howden sees order intake increase 17%

HOWDEN GROUP, the engineer, enjoyed a 17 per cent rise in its order intake, to £284 million, in the first half after a dramatic pick-up in the second quarter offset a slow start to the year (Martin Barrow writes).

However, pre-tax profits were little changed, at £11 million, in the half to October 31, against £11 million previously, and earnings per share fell to 2.4p, from 2.6p, reflecting an increase in minority interests. The interim dividend rises by 5 per cent, to 1p.

Operating profits fell to £12.4 million, from £13.4 million, in spite of a £330,000 contribution from acquisitions. The decline was partly offset by a fall in interest charges to £1.37 million, from £2.44 million. The strong pound cut first-half profits by £600,000. Howden said it would continue to inhibit its growth in the short term.

Bizarre twist to options dealing mystery

Elusive Booth returns cash

BRITON Mark Booth, the alleged insider dealer who made a £82 million (£1 million) profit from options dealing ahead of KPN's £82 billion bid for TNT, took an unexpected twist yesterday when it emerged Mr Booth had asked his broker to give the money to the investors from whom he acquired the stock (Rachel Bridge writes).

Mr Booth, who went missing when the Australian Securities Commission (ASC) launched an investigation into his transaction in September, sent an unmarked fax to Ord Minnett, his brokers, at the weekend with his request.

A spokeswoman for the ASC, which has spent the past two months trying to track down Mr Booth, said: "It is bizarre. He has kissed all the money goodbye, including his initial investment. We still don't know whether he has done anything wrong. We would love to talk to him."

Mr Booth invested £90,000 in options two weeks before KPN's surprise bid for TNT was announced, ordering the options by telephone and paying with untraceable bank cheques. The only communication from him until now had been a fax sent to his brokers, instructing them what to do with the proceeds.

The profits were frozen in a cash management account while the ASC searched for Mr Booth — believed to be an alias — and will now be distributed to the previous owners of the options.

The ASC said it will continue to search for Booth until it goes back to court to resolve the matter in February. Chris Gorman, managing director of Ord Minnett, said: "As far as we're concerned the matter is largely closed. We have no way of contacting Mr Booth and we don't expect to hear from Mr Booth again."

May we take this opportunity to tell our friends that, this year, we are not sending Christmas cards. Instead, we're making donations to several local children's charities and hospices.

Anglian Water Plc wishes everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.



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THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Hunting for words at MFI

A FIRST for Derek Hunt, MFI's flamboyant chairman, who was unusually lost for words at yesterday's interim results meeting.

Asked for his predictions on the future of the housing market, Hunt replied rather early: "If I was as good at predicting things as you think I am, then surely I would be a millionaire." A voice in the crowd piped up: "But you are a millionaire."

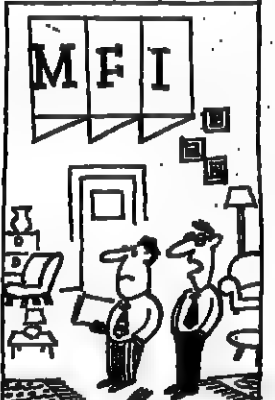
For once, Hunt looked crestfallen.

Silent night

POOR Stephen Davidson, the acting chief executive of TeleWest, the largest cable company, had hoped to learn in November whether he would be confirmed as full-time chief executive, replacing Alan Michaels. But the TeleWest board could not make up its mind and begged for more time: it would let him know by the end of the year. It is still too early, however, to wish him a Merry Christmas. Davidson has just learned that the TeleWest board will now make its decision on January 23. So much for happy holidays.

Herd laughing

CONGRATULATIONS to Andrew Herd and Barry Leighton who were yesterday appointed directors at Société Générale. Previously at Paribas and Morgan Grenfell, Herd will specialise in international mergers and acquisitions in the financial institutions sector. When he left his first post at Price Waterhouse, senior partner Ian Brindle, remarked that Herd was the only person who made him laugh in the morning. Yes, but how?



"We could make more by letting it fully furnished"

Bosses' faith

ALMOST 86 per cent of executive directors who run UK-listed companies have sufficient faith in the business to retain a large chunk of their original holding, buy shares or take up more via option schemes, according to a survey commissioned by Price Waterhouse. The bad news is that around 16 per cent have no stake in the companies that they manage. Gary Ashworth, the founding chairman of Abacus Recruitment, is out in the lead with a 90.9 per cent stake, the biggest block of share capital owned by any one director. Also up there is Kim Tan, with a 79.9 per cent stake in KS Biomedix Holdings, and Russell Nathan, with an 87.1 per cent holding in Romtec, the IT provider.

Inside story

A NEW YEAR and a new start for Duncan Hopper, the controversial managing director of Legal & General's healthcare division. Having joined the insurance company when it set up its healthcare arm almost two years ago, Hopper is now on his way out. According to an insider, his departure is the result of a "personality clash" with David Prosser, L&G's chief executive. Maybe this will give Hopper, a short-story writer for *Granta*, the opportunity to develop his bent for writing.

MORAG PRESTON



European Airbuses flying in the livery of USAir. The Boeing merger has considerable implications for the future of the Airbus consortium

Boeing marriage leaves BAe in need of a 'grand alliance'

The US aviation merger puts immediate pressure on Europe's aerospace industry to effect a strategy that will enable it to continue in competition. Oliver August reports

The aerospace industry has not been hit by an alliance quite like this for a while. Boeing, the world's number one, is taking McDonnell Douglas, the number three, to the altar. Together they could have the power to dictate procurement prices to airlines and air forces around the world unless Europe can produce a competitor of equal weight.

Boeing, as the joint company will be known, is emerging as the undisputed top dog in the battle with its rival Lockheed Martin. Anti-trust regulators could still mug the newly-weds en route to the honeymoon but this deal is not highly controversial. Unlike the BA-American Airlines link-up, the companies are bringing complementary talents into the union.

Boeing cornered the civil aviation market without ever really gaining a foothold on the military side, which is where McDonnell Douglas has been dominant throughout the Cold War. Together the two hope to save \$1 billion a year, which looks only mildly impressive compared to Lockheed's aim of saving closer to \$3 billion.

The deal has rattled a few feathers in the United States where Lockheed is Boeing's main competitor but it has been preparing for such a move with its own acquisition of Martin Marietta, which temporarily put it ahead of Boeing in terms of sales. But it is in Europe, specifically British Aerospace and its European partners, that the long-term impact will really be felt.

Most current BAe projects will be affected by the Boeing deal and every BAe division will need to review its strategic plans. Just when it seemed to be drawing level, Europe's aerospace industry has to play catch-up again. The fact that Airbus matched Boeing's orders in 1994 no longer matters.

But Sir Richard Evans, chief executive of BAe, will not have been completely surprised by the new situation. Much to his credit, BAe has been advocating for years that European aerospace and defence companies need to consolidate to survive. His message will now be heard louder and clearer than before.

The primary reason for consolidation is the ending of the Cold War. Defence budgets around the world have been squeezed to harvest a peace dividend. This was especially true in America, where a political sea change has been effected by the loss of lucrative defence contracts.

The cost of modern aircraft is another factor. Whether in military or civilian aviation, rising standards have only been achieved by increasing costs. With every new generation, the bills are marked up. Today the development, let alone the production, of aircraft is so expensive that costs must be spread across borders. Taxpayers are no longer

prepared to fund the duplication of research and production facilities for the privilege of putting the national flag on the finished product.

Where does this leave BAe? The company faces three strategic options. First, it could try to join the American bandwagon and build one or more transatlantic alliances. BAe would by no means be entering new ground here. McDonnell Douglas, Boeing's bride, used to be BAe's running mate. Together the two made the Harrier jump-jet a world-wide success.

But recently the relationship has lost its way. Last month, their bid to build the Joint Strike Fighter, the navy fighter jet for the next century, was thrown out by the Pentagon before the tendering had started. While Lockheed and Boeing were given more than \$800 million each to develop prototypes, BAe and McDonnell Douglas were left to offer their expertise to those two. Now that Boeing has found a partner, Lockheed may try

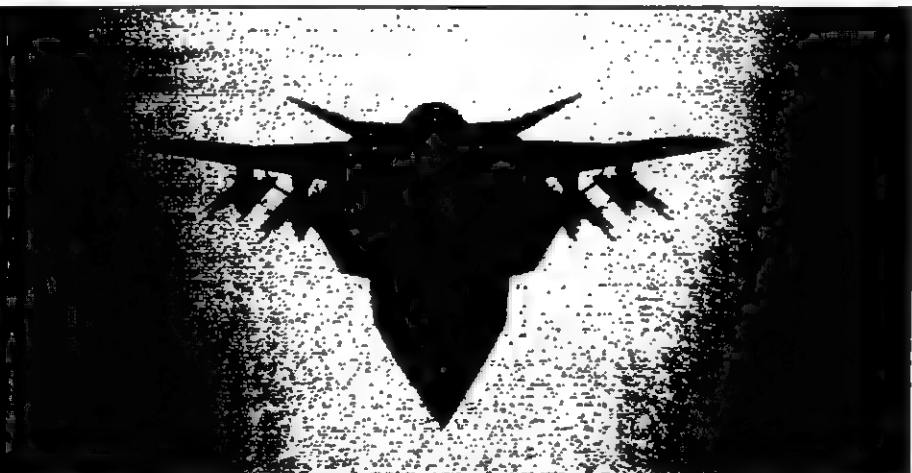
even harder to get BAe on board.

However, this could only work as a one-off. BAe should not enter a transatlantic partnership because it would end up as the junior partner irrespective of who it picks. Even were it to team up with a smaller US company, American secrecy laws are such that the US company would ultimately be in the driving seat.

Nevertheless, being in the driving seat is what BAe has shown itself to be very good at. Its biggest order this year, the Nimrod maritime aircraft, is a case in point. BAe acts as primary contractor, passing workshops to subcontractors.

The new BAe has been purpose-built for such projects by Sir Richard.

If a US link-up is out, could this be the time to revive Lord Weinstock's old dream of merging BAe and GEC? The arguments against this are still the same. Creating "national champions" is a dangerous game to play. Such industrial giants become so



The proposed Joint Strike Fighter, a failed BAe project with McDonnell Douglas

Eric Reguly on Hollinger's surprise newspaper sale

Media 'gem' loses its lustre

One of the longest media battles came to a surprise ending yesterday when Hollinger International, the newspaper group controlled by Conrad Black, sold its 25 per cent stake in John Fairfax Holdings to Brierley Investments of New Zealand for A\$544 million (£260 million).

The move caught the newspaper industry off guard because Hollinger had considered Fairfax, publisher of the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Melbourne Age*, both among the most profitable dailies in the world, a gem. Furthermore, the buyer is not known for its media investments around the world, ranging from 46 per cent of Thistle Hotels in Britain to half of Sky City, a casino in Auckland.

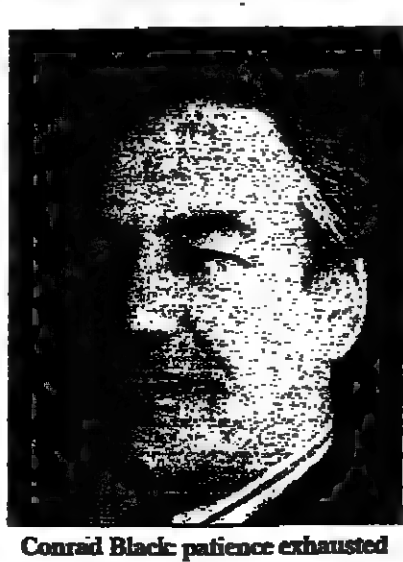
Mr Black, Hollinger's chairman, said that he simply lost patience with the Australian Government and its media ownership restrictions, which prevented Hollinger from raising its stake beyond 25 per cent. Mr Black said: "It was clear to us that there was no way forward. We gave it five years and we did everything possible to get a control position."

Hollinger, whose flagship papers are *The Daily Telegraph* and its Sunday sister, acquired a stake in Fairfax in 1991 as part of the Towering consortium, which paid A\$1.45 billion for the ailing publisher and set out to reverse its fortunes.

Two years later, Hollinger, convinced that the Fairfax turnaround was in place, raised its Fairfax ownership to 25 per cent. But the real challenge was convincing Paul Keating, then Labour Prime Minister, to relax the media ownership restric-

tions. The effort became more urgent two years ago when Mr Black found Kerry Packer, Australia's wealthiest businessman, and Rupert Murdoch, chairman and chief executive of The News Corporation, parent company of *The Times*, nipping at his heels. Mr Packer bought a 15 per cent stake in Fairfax while News Corp tucked about 5 per cent into its portfolio. Mr Black doubled his efforts to raise his Fairfax stake to 35 per cent at 25 per cent he was a sitting duck. He said at the time: "The problem is, if there were a takeover offer we'd be vulnerable."

The campaign failed, but Mr Black did not give up hope. In March, Mr Keating lost the election and John Howard, the



Conrad Black: patience exhausted

Liberal Prime Minister, hinted that the ownership rules would change. In the end, the restrictions remained and Mr Black made good his threat to get out. The effort was not a total loss. He said Hollinger will book a capital gain of about US\$220 million on the Fairfax sale.

Hollinger, an acquisitions machine by nature, will not spend the money immediately. Instead, it will be used to eliminate some Hollinger debt. "We might enjoy having a conservative balance sheet for a while," Mr Black said.

But Hollinger never sits still for long. There is speculation that it would like to expand its small-town newspaper business in the US — it has run out of room in Canada and has shown little interest in buying another national paper in Britain — and may go after the Journal Register chain in the North East. The papers are owned by Warburg Pincus, the investment bank that owns a stake in Channel 5, Britain's new terrestrial broadcaster.

Brierley's plans for Fairfax are not known. Paul Collins, chief executive, said that Brierley "looks forward to being a supportive, long-term shareholder", but observers note that the group makes a living by buying and selling investments. They would not be surprised if Brierley was holding the Fairfax shares for another buyer, who could be Kerry Packer. He is still keen to own Fairfax but cannot go beyond 15 per cent because of his television interests. Mr Packer may be gambling that the Government will change the media ownership rules sooner rather than later. If so, he will know on which door to knock.



JANET BUSH

Talking euro nonsense

The single currency project has always been a tool to take power over European interest rates out of the hands of meddling politicians. It has always been designedly anti-democratic.

In exchange for giving up economic sovereignty, European leaders were offered a virtuous straitjacket that would drive out the evils of inflation, competitive devaluation and fiscal recklessness. Europe would be forced to seek greater competitiveness in world markets not through beggar-thy-neighbour ill-discipline but through lasting structural change. In the face of opposition from long-coosied electorates, Europe would modernise. A super-European currency may even challenge the dollar's supremacy as the world's reserve currency.

Of course, these economic arguments have always been subsidiary to the political ambitions of France and Germany, still exercised with postwar paranoia. Britain, with its historical and emotional ties with the Commonwealth and America has never felt quite the same way about building a unified Europe. But neither does Britain share the same view of single currency economics. Britain has little interest in competing with the dollar, not least because sterling's value is as much determined by movements in the US currency as economic developments at home or in Europe.

After the Dublin summit, it is clear that the economic arguments for the single currency — credible or not — are fast imploding as France reasserts its national sovereignty. It was determined not to give in to German demands for a Stability Pact that would impose automatic penalties on member states not playing by the fiscal rules. As France wanted, the Dublin compromise leaves elected politicians with the final say on whether a country should be fined or not and by how much.

Fascinatingly, Jacques Chirac has now hinted that politicians should co-ordinate their desires on monetary policy too. Far from crying foul, Alexandre Lamfalussy, head of the European Monetary Institute that will turn into the independent European Central Bank, has admitted that politicians will continue to play a role. Outside control of the ECB would be in complete contradiction of the Maastricht treaty, he said. Dialogue would not. M Lamfalussy said that he could conceive of sudden changes in the financing needs of a large country with unacceptable consequences for others. "To avoid this, there must be ex ante co-ordination of policies. Finance ministers must agree

among themselves, talk among themselves," he said. Unless Germany baulks at the whole thing, what is in prospect is a European talking shop, a street market noisy with professional hagglers, an interminable teleconference where executive decisions are held up because satellite reception from Greece is fuzzy and Britain refuses to accept its share of the cost, a monthly monetary meeting between Kenneth Clarke and Eddie George, held nightmarishly in a hall of mirrors.

This is not to say that sovereignty over economic decision-making and democratic accountability are expendable. They are not. But to give away some control, a bit of sovereignty, in exchange for partial monetary discipline from a central bank still subject to ministerial nods and winks seems like a very bad bargain indeed. This new system would make the Brussels bureaucracy, already regarded with such suspicion by European voters, look positively streamlined.

In deciding to join the exchange-rate mechanism, Britain, cowed by decades of bad macroeconomic management, opted for handing over effective control of its monetary policy to the

It is clear that the economic arguments for the single currency are fast imploding

which at least boasted a proven record of success in defending its currency and fighting inflation. The loss of flexibility and control that that experiment entailed still leaves most Britons extremely suspicious of things European. The prospect of economic policy made in Paris is likely to prove positively distasteful.

Of course, there will be optimists returning home from Dublin who will argue that recent deals will rightly reassure the electorate on sovereignty while, as a minimum, ensuring the discipline conferred by an independent European central bank. But why should any of us have confidence in a confusing mish-mash, arrived at because the political aspirations of France and Germany were, at root, incompatible and pushed through because they were too proud to admit it?

Euro-enthusiasts argue that only chaos would ensue if the project is abandoned, that all the fiscal and monetary discipline that striving to meet the Maastricht criteria has enforced would break down. That is to give up entirely on the duty of governments to pursue sensible economic policies. It also ignores the fact that there is no better source of discipline than that of the market. How much swifter and more objective the punishment for economic recklessness imposed by the markets than a Stability Pact subject to political negotiation.

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Equities up but gilts weaken

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
126	125	125	125	0	0	125
127	126	126	126	0	0	126
128	127	127	127	0	0	127
129	128	128	128	0	0	128
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132	131	131	131	0	0	131
133	132	132	132	0	0	132
134	133	133	133	0	0	133
135	134	134	134	0	0	134
136	135	135	135	0	0	135
137	136	136	136	0	0	136
138	137	137	137	0	0	137
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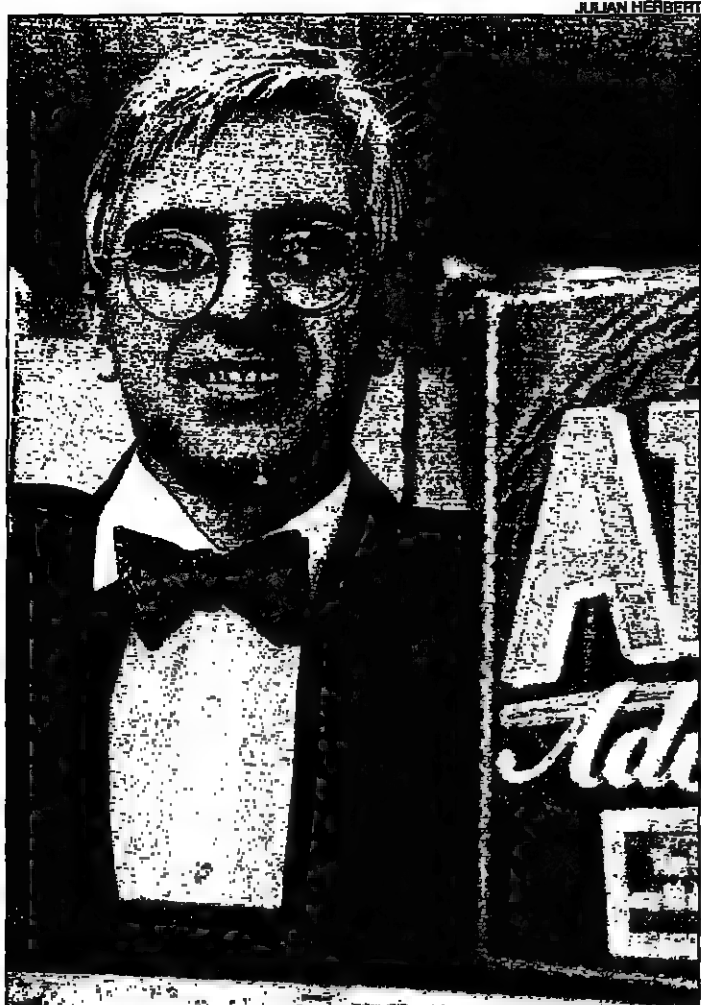
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Clare Stewart and Jennai Cox on how board games are on a roll for Christmas

Success is kids' stuff



The turnaround came for Gary Wyatt when he found there was a world market for his low-tech board games for children

The Nuremberg toy fair has particular significance for entrepreneur Gary Wyatt (Clare Stewart writes). He says: "The turnaround in my business came when I realised there was a world market for my products."

Mr Wyatt, 39, runs the Green Board Game Company, maker of fun and educational games for children. France is now his biggest market, ahead of the US and UK, accounting for £100,000 of sales. Despite the electronic sophistication of many modern games, board games have retained their appeal. Figures from the Association of Toy Retailers showed that traditional toys such as Monopoly and Lego are again bestsellers this Christmas.

Showing small children at toy fairs how to play games with Wilko Six - coloured strands that can be made into models - is a far cry from Mr Wyatt's previous occupation as a director of insurance at American Express.

Trained as an accountant and with an MBA from Cranfield, leaving the comfortable corporate world and plunging into the chaotic environment of running a small business would seem an unlikely career move. "I left because I had had enough commuting around Europe and because I had invented a game," he explains. Traffic jams on the M25 are credited with the inspiration for his first game because Mr Wyatt found himself making up words from the letters of car number plates.

The idea took root and emerged as Alpha Animals, in which players move around a board marked with different letters, having to name types of animal beginning with the letter on which they land.

Before leaving American Express, Mr Wyatt tested the water for his game by exhibiting at two trade fairs. The very encouraging response prompted him to run the business full time, ploughing around £50,000 of savings into producing the first 3,500 games.

He says: "Our unit costs were far too high then. We have since learnt from experience." Together with the income from Alpha Animals, Mr Wyatt financed the company by increasing his mortgage and overdraft and taking out a loan under the Loan Guarantee Scheme. A friend also invested, in return for a small stake in the company.

Last year we broke even and this year we will be very profitable," says Mr Wyatt. Sales this year are expected to be between £280,000 and £300,000. His goal is turnover of £1 million by 2000.

Mr Wyatt works from his home in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, helped by his wife, Mary, and two part-time staff. The manufacture and distribution of the games is subcontracted out. The Green Board Game name derives from the use of recycled materials and natural materials. Having won a lot of awards, the company now has 14 games in its catalogue, nine of which were devised by Mr Wyatt. Sales through retailers make up 40 per cent of turnover, while a further 40 per cent comes through mail order and charity gift catalogues.

The Green Board Game Company is on 01494 538999.



Rick Vane, left, and Graham Thornton play one of the games that has brought them £250,000 turnover

Odd ideas pay off

To pass time while waiting for their television game show to take off three years ago, Graham Thornton and Rick Vane turned it into a board game (Jennai Cox writes). The television show has yet to make it on air, but Merzized was a sellout at toy shops last Christmas and is now one of five games developed by its inventors and contributing to a £250,000 turnover in the first 12 months.

The two, who have a background in presenting and promoting children's television programmes, registered their board game as a trademark and approached a manufacturer. Only one in 40 board game ideas reaches the shop

shelf, but Waddington was so taken by the idea of people giving bizarre answers to straightforward questions after being hypnotised, that it ordered a mock-up right away.

Mr Thornton and Mr Vane then wrote the questions and promotional material and were ready to go when, at the start of last year, Waddington was taken over by Hasbro, which put all new ideas on hold. Having put in two years' work, the pair decided to take their idea to other manufacturers, and Spears expressed interest. However, by the time the two men had bought back the rights, there were no trade fairs left for Spears to advertise the game.

So, the pair set up TV Board Games to produce and sell Merzized themselves. "We were stunned by the reaction," Mr Thornton said. "Within two weeks of selling the game we had a huge order from Toys 'R Us."

The Midland Bank provided substantial financial help to fulfil the order, and, after the success of Christmas sales, the pair abandoned their television careers to become full-time game inventors.

A priority was to get another game on to the market. "The most difficult thing in this industry is persuading buyers to take new games," said Mr Vane. "There are so many people who make one game, make some money and then disappear. They need to know you are going to be around for a while."

Rummage, based on an orientation exercise used by Henry VIII's courtiers to familiarise themselves with palaces, was launched in January. "Our games are very unconventional," Mr Vane said.

The pair have had approaches from big companies, but are committed to keeping their business independent and British. And they are unworried by competition from television. "Retailers have reported growth in traditional board games this year," Mr Thornton said. "You can't interact when watching television or playing computer games."

TV Board Games: 01904 613318

A SMALL business in Wiltshire is bringing back the traditional wooden jigsaw puzzles associated with Christmas past (Rodney Hobson writes).

Wentworth Wooden Jigsaw Company was launched two years ago by Kevin Preston, who had taken early retirement as an accountant. His mother was in a nursing home and she asked him to get her a wooden puzzle like the ones she had as a little girl.

He thought it would be easy, but apart from simple puzzles for young children all the ones in the shop were the mass-produced

Traditional jigsaw puzzle solved

cardboard variety that his mother disdained. In the end he made one for her and decided there could be a market for wooden puzzles for adults.

James Leith, marketing manager, says: "Mr Preston felt there had to be a way of using new technology to produce old-fashioned wooden jigsaws. We heat-set images on to plywood so they are very smooth and shiny like glass paint. A computer-driven

laser cuts the pieces." Clients are mainly blue-chip companies and heritage organisations. Invitations can be overprinted on pictures of, say, a golfing scene to invite prestige clients to hospital events, while shops at institutions such as the National Portrait Gallery can reproduce their best-selling postcard on the puzzle.

Wentworth is also moving increasingly into high street retailers, although the growth of this market has been slower. While a maker of cardboard puzzles will produce thousands of the same designs, Wentworth can produce a run of as few as 14 economically.

Prices range from £3.50 for a 40-piece puzzle intended as a Christmas stocking filler, to just under £20 for a 400-piece puzzle.

Mr Leith says: "We can do anything with a jigsaw puzzle. If a company wants a promotional puzzle to launch a new product we can cut pieces in the shape of the product and the company logo." Wentworth has ten full-time staff, makes 7,000 puzzles a month, which are sold all over the world, and sales are double last year's.

Wentworth Wooden Jigsaw Company is on 01666 840033.



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■ VISUAL ART 1

Richard Long's topographical show inaugurates the refurbished Spaxex gallery in Exeter



■ VISUAL ART 2

... while at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park Phillip King reveals his latest work

THE TIMES
ARTS



■ VISUAL ART 3

At Oxford, Professor Martin Kemp reveals plans to turn the old jail into a visual arts centre



■ VISUAL ART 4

Thirties decor revisited: a new exhibition pays homage to the singular designs of Betty Joel

VISUAL ART: Richard Cork reviews evocative shows in the West Country and Yorkshire. Plus London exhibitions

The Long and winding road

Between the Arncliffe in Bristol and the Tate St Ives, the West Country is poorly supplied with galleries devoted to contemporary art. Even at Exeter, where the admirable Spaxex has pursued a lively exhibition policy in city-centre premises, a large-scale refurbishment scheme forced the gallery's closure this year. But now the improved and extended premises have been completed, and their reopening heralds an ambitious new era for this landmark, much-needed institution.

Spaxex developed during the late 1970s from a group of artists' studios set up in a three-storey Victorian warehouse. Public exhibitions have been held on the ground floor for 18 years, but the facilities gradually became inadequate. Artists today often require a surprising amount of room to display their work, and galleries increasingly recognise the importance of providing a substantial back-up programme of educational events. So with funds provided by the National Lottery, the Foundation for Sport and the Arts and the Henry Moore Foundation, rebuilding began in 1995.

The outcome fully justifies the money and effort involved. Designed by Nicholas Gilbert Scott, the split-level galleries now provide ample space for even the most complex and demanding installations. In the old courtyard area, where the warehouse abuts the city's medieval and Roman walls, a luminous atrium provides room for workshops and lectures. The office has been banished to the basement, making way for a glazed entrance and reception area, while a new lighting system has transformed the visibility of exhibits throughout the space.

The real test for any gallery centres on its ability to accommodate the art on display. And by choosing Richard Long for the inaugural show, Spaxex has scored a triumph. Always supremely sensitive to the character of the places where he works, Long uses these new rooms with aplomb. One gallery is dominated by a vast wall image, vigorously applied by hand. Monumental in itself, and surrounded by flicks, splatters and drips testifying to the vigour of its making, this awesome presence evokes the immensity of the landscape Long explores on his walks.

Traversing the earth's surface throughout the world has provided

him with a perpetual stimulus for more than a quarter of a century. For the Spaxex show, though, he took the apt decision to concentrate on an area of special, local significance. Born in Bristol and still living near the city today, he discovered Dartmoor on childhood visits to his grandparents. The bareness of the moor ignited his imagination, introducing him to a primordial world where only the most elemental of sculptural forms withstand exposure.

Since 1969 Long has returned there regularly. As if in tribute to an area that played such a formative role in the development of his art, he has produced a substantial number of Dartmoor-inspired works. Once, during a two-day walk, he laid out a stone circle descended directly from the earliest

Stone clusters are positioned with spare and graceful finality

surviving manifestations of the sculptural impulse in Britain. Related stone clusters have been assembled on the floor at Spaxex, positioned with the spare, graceful finality which distinguishes all Long's work.

He accompanies them with a selection of written works framed on the walls. Some are deliberately simple, recounting how he walked around a cairn at Great Gurns Head a hundred times in the mist. Others shape words into primal forms redolent of his passage across the land, like the 60-minute "circle walk" he carried out on Dartmoor in 1984.

Long's limpid, potent and utterly singleminded art is untroubled by the kind of convulsive changes undergone by Phillip King's sculpture in recent years. He made his reputation in the 1960s by working principally with fibreglass, metal and plastic, exploring an abstract language with an often flamboyant eye for colour. But suddenly, around 1990, King began producing furrowed bronzes where figures could be discerned, often conveying

distress or macabre humour. At once playful and anguished, they marked a disturbing departure.

Now, however, King has altered again. As an exhibition of new work at Yorkshire Sculpture Park reveals, he has returned to more abstract forms without yielding the ability to surprise. For this is a show of ceramic vessels, modelled in clay mixed with grog and paper pulp. He thrives on the increasing changeability of materials today, and at the same time finds nourishment in the most ancient traditions.

The springboard for his vessels came from a stay in Japan. He started making small vessels on a potter's wheel, and became fascinated by the products of Jomon, the oldest ceramic culture in the world. But King has no intention of copying Japanese precedents. The vessels in his new exhibition belong firmly within his own imaginative world, and their initial air of serenity soon gives way to unease.

Although the word "vessel" may lead us to expect a consoling wholeness, he ensures that they are riddled with signs of disharmony. Forms often turn out to be shattered, and in *Cup Drift* the tilted central object lies half-buried, like a beaker abandoned in the desert. It may arise from King's recollections of a childhood spent in Tunisia, so these ceramic vessels are in one respect a throwback to King's earliest memories, when he first became aware of the mystery inherent in archaeological remains. But they also chime with his preoccupations in the early 1960s, when he would make a compact cone and then slit or slice it through. In the same spirit, he now ensures that the barrel crowning a vessel called *The Watcher* has been pierced by a triangular hole. The plinth-like form below is gashed, and a curving form leaps like a breaking wave from the shadowy interior. It is a startling eruption, both exuberant and erotic.

Most of the vessels, though, concentrate on a more restrained interplay between swollen volumes and sharp penetrations. In the Cubist-influenced *Eye Vessel*, the ripeness of the body is assuaged by jagged cavities. But two cups are lodged invitingly at the centre of the sculpture, countering the brittle tension elsewhere.

Occasionally, the vessels take on a human identity. *Bodhisatva* suggests, in its rounded contours, a



One of Richard Long's works at Spaxex in Exeter recalls the stone circle he laid out on Dartmoor

female figure. But her promise of fulfilment is threatened by the rigid, rectangular structure interrupting the gentle swell of her body. The high biscuit firing King employs instead of conventional glazing gives the vessels a stone finish, as bleached as the moonlit Islamic buildings he remembers

admiring in his childhood. That is why these poised and authoritative new works have such a commanding presence. Despite their wilful contradictions, they end up affirming an immemorial stillness. The pleasure King takes in exploring his new motif is clear. And in *Tree Vessel* he sums up this excitement

by transforming its spout into a sapling. Only a single green leaf springs from the branches, but its promise of future renewal is unmistakable.

Richard Long at Spaxex Gallery, Exeter (01392 431788) until Saturday; Phillip King at Yorkshire Sculpture Park (01924 830302) until Jan 12

AROUND THE GALLERIES

IN THE firmament of modern design, Betty Joel (1894-1985) was a shooting star, tremendously famous for barely ten years and then almost completely forgotten. She was born and brought up in China, where her father, Sir James Stewart Lockhart, was a diplomat and Colonial Secretary in Hong Kong. In 1921 she married David Joel, a naval commander, whose hobby was carpentry; he made much of the furniture for their first home, she criticised his designs, he challenged her to do better, and she did. In 1923 they set up a small business, and two years later opened a West End shop; in 1926 they were so successful that they built a factory on Kingston Bypass. Betty was the designer, and among her commissions were interiors for the new Bank of England, the lobby and reading room of the *Daily Express* building in Fleet Street, and offices and libraries for the Shell-Mex building, the Savoy Hotel and many grand private patrons. But in 1937 the Joels' marriage broke up. Betty retired completely, and apparently never had anything more to do with design for the rest of her long life. Her distinctive style is mostly streamlined Modernism on the French model, but produced according to British Arts and Crafts ideals, with here and there a hint of her Chinese childhood peeking through.

There has never been a solo exhibition or a thorough reappraisal of her work, until now. The Joel exhibition, which includes Betty's famous circular bed and a veneered office interior reconstructed, is staged in Foulk Lewis's new premises in Kingston Exchange, not far from the Joel factory. Foulk Lewis, *The Kingston Exchange*, 29-31 London Road, Kingston-upon-Thames (0181-549 2004), until Jan 31

IT IS only stating the obvious to categorise Kitty North's paintings as "landscape-based abstractions", but much more difficult to give any adequate idea of the impression they make in the flesh, one is tempted to say, so fresh, edible even, do they appear. This show takes us through the various stages of creation, from the dashing on-the-spot sketches, which stay close to impressionistic representation, through the more finished pastels and small oils, where the documentary is gradually formalised out of the picture, and then to the larger oils, where the original facts of the landscape are buried in a lava-flow of paint. The result of this build-up is a highly tactile surface of delicately calculated colour.

Swan Mead Gallery, 14 Swan Mead, Tower Bridge Road, SE1 (0171-394 0733), until the weekend.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

Professor plots his prison break-out

Oxford don Martin Kemp tells Isabel Carlisle about his plans for a visual arts centre in the old jail

When Martin Kemp, the new Professor of History of Art at Oxford University, was interviewed for the job, he said he wanted to "take the teaching of visual matters out of the ghettos of the art history department". Few of those who appointed him could have realised how quickly, and how unusually, he would put his ideas into practice.

For the past six months Kemp has been working on a visual arts project centred on the now empty buildings of Oxford Prison. A consortium made up of the developer Jacobs Holdings, the Oxford Museum of Modern Art, the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art, the university's art history department and the County Museum has put a

detailed proposal to Oxford County Council for a new cultural and artistic centre on the site. They are now shortlisted alongside three other proposals: two for hotels, offices and shops combined, and one for an expansion by St Peter's College which abuts the site. All four will be presented to a public meeting at County Hall today. The result should be announced at the end of January.

When Oxford Prison was closed last September the Home Office offered the county council the chance to buy the site back for £9,000 (the amount which the town had

sold it for in the 1870s). Proposals were then invited for the site's development, with the brief to create 20,000 square feet of extra offices for County Hall and to make public access to the rest of the site a priority. Bounded by New Road on one side and Paradise Street on the other, the site contains the mound of Oxford's Anglo-Saxon castle, the medieval St George's Tower and the complex of prison buildings dating from the late 18th century.

There is not much scope for new architecture since many of the existing buildings are listed Grade I. Instead the

excitement comes from the possibility of opening Oxford Castle to the public once more and turning the prison buildings into spaces that both the city and the university can use. For Kemp, it means creating the right setting for his new visual studies course, as well as the chance to link art history to art teaching and to the pioneering work being done by Oxford MOMA in exploring the possibilities of video and film in art.

Plans drawn up for the consortium by the Oxford Architects Partnership give the visual studies centre a separate complex of new

buildings in the southeast corner, while Oxford MOMA is aiming to build a state-of-the-art film theatre that would also run a programme for the public.

If the consortium's bid is successful, an estimated £20 million-plus will have to be raised by all the participants together to complete the development. But as Kemp says: "No other centre will have this large a brief, coming across traditional ideas about the fine arts. If you look at younger artists today, you see them using video, computer art and installation alongside painting and sculpture. This is all about getting rid of limitations and inhibitions." That is something for which a liberated prison site should be an appropriate setting.



Kemp: "No other centre will have so large a brief"

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FILM

The Hollywood dream is tested by reality, as a young screenwriter pitches her idea to the moguls



MUSIC 1

Maurizio Pollini continues his majestic progress through the Beethoven piano sonatas

THE TIMES ARTS



MUSIC 2

Toscanini's finest hours: the maestro's best recordings are selected in Building a Library



TOMORROW

Raring to be Blanche: Jessica Lange prepares to make her West End stage debut

Ludwig in the round

HARDLY a seat was left unfilled as Maurizio Pollini reached the second stage in his progress through the Beethoven piano sonatas in seven programmes, each of which is being repeated in Paris and Vienna as he goes. His latest instalment comprised no fewer than six sonatas, in which his playing reflected intellectual perception as well as technical brilliance.

He modified the strict chronological sequence to finish

Maurizio Pollini Festival Hall

with a finely judged account of the universally familiar *Pathétique Sonata*, Op 13, not so bold in attack as some have made it but with a degree of inner passion that gave a sense of magnificence to the work at the outset, and then played the famous slow movement with a welcome momentum as well as feeling.

Pollini preceded this with the two sonatas of Op 14, composed at much the same time but published a little later. Here Beethoven is in debt to Mozart for the classical sobriety and sociable elegance of Op 14 No 1. Rhythmic lilt and disarming sentiment abounded here, and if the Allegretto middle movement was not as fast as Beethoven himself, was said to have played it, its simplicity of effect was to be treasured, as was the playful spirit of the finale.

The lighthearted charm Pollini brought to this was redoubled in the second of the sonatas, in G major, where the flowing figuration of the first movement could almost be said to anticipate Chopin, and the responsive ebullience of the finger work was pursued throughout the piece, touch and tone in ideal balance.

The programme had begun with the three sonatas of Op 10 from a year or two earlier, when Beethoven for the most part harped back to previous Classical models while filling the outlines with new ideas. Possibly a piano of Beethoven's time would have sounded less bass-heavy than did some of the keyboard writing, but the playing enriched the character of the music without affectation.

NOEL GOODWIN

Go on, make me an offer

Clare Bayley, the winner of *The Times* Screenwriting Competition, travels to Hollywood to sell her ideas



Clare Bayley: "It seems that British screenwriters have a particular prestige in Hollywood at the moment. But I get a variety of responses from the studios. I decide not to pitch my story to anyone"

The story is simple, formulaic even. A young English woman wins a screenwriting competition and is flown over to Hollywood to sell her script. Great idea, but that is not the one I am selling: it is the one I am living. The film treatment I am selling won the approval of the four eminent British film-makers judging the competition — David Aukin (Channel 4), Mark Shivas (BBC), Norma Heyman (who produced *Dangerous Liaisons* and *The Secret Agent*) and Tim Bevan of Working Title — and I am currently developing the first draft with Zephyr Films in London. It is a thriller set in Finland, its main character is a young Englishwoman on a quest to find her father, and the love interest is an older, gay, alcoholic Finn.

It is not exactly what is known in Hollywood as a "high concept" film. Hostile aliens hovering over the White House, now that is high concept. My screenplay, *Corridors in the Air*, is what is politely called a "high execution" piece — it is not what you say, it is the way that you say it. And so far there are only ten pages of a treatment to judge by. Oh well, the best stories need seemingly insurmountable obstacles before the third-act resolution.

In LA in December it is 70 degrees and sunny, and everything seems possible in these conditions. I check into the swanky Sunset Marquis hotel just off Sunset Boulevard, where Michael Hutchence is already lunching by the pool. In high spirits I cruise off in my hire car for a meeting at one of Tinseltown's top agencies. Waiting for my appointment, I listen to the receptionist telling her friend that she enjoys working at the agency, but she has got to cut down on her hours because otherwise she will never finish her script. Everyone in Hollywood is at it.

The agent is surprisingly positive about *Corridors*. No doubt he is impressed with my list of meetings, which includes the vice-president of production at Warner's, the director of production at Twentieth Century Fox and Lisa Henson (daughter of Jim of *Muppet* fame), who has just set up a production company under the wing of the Sony Corporation. The agent blinds me with figures. This is a \$25 million movie, he proclaims; he cannot see it being made for less. I nod sagely.

He likes the setting — Helsinki is exotic to an American audience. If somebody signed me up, I would be looking at \$150,000 straight up, with the same again if and when it is made. Considering that as a playwright in London I do not expect more than £5,000 maximum for a play (usually less), \$150,000 seems

rather appealing. But calculate it as a proportion of \$25 million, though, and you start to understand just how this status-obsessed industry rates writers.

The distinguished screenwriter Naomi Foner (*Running on Empty* with River Phoenix, *A Dangerous Woman* with Debra Winger) takes me out to lunch, tells me a joke. "Did you hear the one about the dumb actor?" she says. "He thought he could advance his career by sleeping with the screenwriter." She puts it down to the fact that movies started out silent, and words were only added as an afterthought. John Sayles likens the studios' treatment of writers to football clubs. Once they own the story, they can try any formation they like. If every movie that hit the screens was written by only one person, 80 per cent of

One morning at breakfast, I found myself sitting at the next table to Steven Spielberg, who was being pitched to by a British director. The creator of *ET* (Melissa Mathison wrote the screenplay, but how many people remember that?) was relaxed and easy, and the idea sounded strong, but the Brit was struggling, intimidated no doubt by the rare chance to have Mr S's undivided attention for all of 40 minutes. We Brits are not comfortable reducing complex ideas to a few sentences.

But to pursue our dreams, we all come West. You cannot go any further West than LA, and so the fantasies pile up high and fast. The studio lots are the home of these dreams, and it is thrilling to have meetings there. To get to the executives' offices at Twentieth Century Fox, I walk past graffiti, run-down street scenes where they are shooting *NYPD Blue*. The Sony lot is the old MGM site, and to get to Lisa Henson I walk past the huge old hangars where Judy Garland first sang *Over the Rainbow*, and imagine Humphrey Bogart stubbing out his cigarette on the Tarmac under my feet.

But what is the reality? It seems that British writers have a particular prestige in Hollywood. Hossein Amini, who wrote the screenplay for *Jude*, is considered "hot". Christopher Hampton's name is on everybody's lips, now that his adaptation of Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* is in the cinemas. And of course the *Trainspotting/Shallow Grave* triumvirate of John Hodge, Danny Boyle and Andrew Macdonald are taken very seriously indeed.

It is not just blockbusters being made. The independent film industry is thriving at the moment, even in Hollywood, and various subdivisions of the larger studios are interested in younger, more esoteric and even European talent.

As for me, I get a variety of responses. One exec tells me that I should rework *Corridors* to be able to entice a really big name into the main part — Jodie Foster, say, or Sharon Stone? Another advises me to build up some experience in England before taking on Hollywood. Yet another expertly terminates the meeting within 15 minutes. But overall, the message is positive. "There's no shortage of money, but it's still hard to find talented writers, even in this city," I was told. "Just persist. You'll end up working here." As I wait at LA airport for my plane home, I watch the sun setting over the Pacific and wonder if this could be the start of a beautiful relationship — or if I am just California dreaming.

The agent proclaims that this will make a \$25 million blockbuster — at least?

screenwriters in Hollywood would be out of work.

In fact, it is safer to have a high execution idea than a high concept one. Once the studio has bought the concept, they can get any old hack in to write it, but a high execution writer cannot be separated from his or her high execution idea. The problem is that Hollywood does not deal in written treatments, it deals in verbal pitches, as immortalised in *The Player*. Writers practise their pitches for a couple of months before a meeting with a studio exec. They practise on all their friends, their family, their colleagues, even the waiters in the diners (who are all screenwriters anyway), and hone them according to the response they get. "If you can't enthuse me with an idea in a couple of sentences, how am I going to sell it to the American public?" one exec said to me.

I have decided not to pitch my story to anyone. Having won the competition, I am in the enviable position that they have all read my treatment. So I shall make contacts, get feedback and then send them the highly executed screenplay when it is written. I have witnessed a few pitches, and know that I could not do *Corridors* any justice.

CLASSICAL CHOICE
A guide to the best available recordings, presented in conjunction with Radio 3

A TOSCANINI SURVEY
Reviewed by Robert Philip

Although Arturo Toscanini ended his conducting career more than 40 years ago, there are more than 100 of his recordings still available. Most of them are in RCA's *Toscanini Collection*, and the great majority of these are from the 1940s and early 1950s, with the NBC Symphony Orchestra. But a number of other recordings, many of them live, are available on other labels.

There are three areas of repertoire for which he was particularly noted: Beethoven, French music, and his first love, Italian opera. Toscanini had a reputation only what was written. This was not literally true, but he does have a very direct, vigorous approach to tempo and rhythm which works best in those symphonies in which Beethoven is himself at his most direct — Nos 3, 5, and 7.

The finest performance of the *Eroica*, with an intense funeral march, is from his 1939 cycle (RCA GD 60269). His 1952 recording of No 5 is very satisfying (RCA GD 60255), but there is a slower, equally good, performance from 1933. This is in a three-disc set of recordings from Toscanini's years with the New York Philharmonic (Pearl GEMMCD5 9373).

There are specific composers who benefit from Toscanini's kind of intensity. One of



them is César Franck, whose symphony receives a very urgent performance (Dell'Arte CD DA 9021).

His recordings of Debussy with the NBC Orchestra can seem rather too clear and clinical, but with the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1941 *Iberia* and *La Mer* are wonderfully sensuous and atmospheric (RCA GD 60311). And with the same orchestra he gives a passionate performance of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique Symphony* (RCA GD 60312).

But it is in Italian opera that Toscanini excels, notably Verdi's *Falstaff*, in which he is alert to every detail (RCA GD 60251). Best of all are two operas with which he was particularly associated: Verdi's *Otello*, in whose premiere he played the cello (RCA GD 60302), and Puccini's *La Bohème*, whose premiere he conducted under the supervision of the composer in 1896 (RCA GD 60288 E18.99).

I can think of no finer Christmas present in the opera's centenary year than this set, conducted by the 79-year-old Toscanini in 1946.

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● Building a Library returns to Radio 3 (4pm) on Saturday, December 28, with Mahler's *Symphony No 7*

CHRISTMAS SHOWS: Jolly Vivian Ellis revival; two famous tales reworked

Old-fashioned orphan values

Vivian Ellis is the kind of show you would expect to find in the attic, sandwiched between an old copy of *Peter Pan* and Arthur Ransome's *Swallows and Amazons*. Dusted down and lovingly resurrected by Dan

Listen to the Wind
King's Head, NI

Crawford, this quaint 42-year-old fantasy will always smell of mothballs, however many new songs Ellis might have composed for this production. Having come to live with their grandmother, three orphans — the mischievous Jeremy and Harriet, and their slightly stuck-up cousin Emma — join forces when adventure beckons in the shape of a magic music box. "You know, Emma, you're really not a bad sort," pronounces Ben McCosker's Jeremy after the children cleverly and skilfully sing of their

BOTH *The Wizard of Oz* and *Peter Pan* are derived from books, although *The Wizard* (Polka Theatre, Wimbledon) comes to us by way of the MGM film which added the conservative philosophy that East, West, the old backyard's best. Polka's lively production is by Roman Stefanski, who played the Scarecrow here four years ago. The action moves swiftly forward, the familiar songs are pleasingly sung, and details are imaginative, funny or both. I liked the use of Remembrance Day poppies to provide the pattern on Dorothy's curtains, and the image of the house caught up in the cyclone — a model whirling at the end of a pole with the lights low — is excellent.

Muppet-like puppets bobbing about in the scenery make the Munchkin scene, often an embarrassment, an amusing preliminary to the Oz adventures, and the



Paula Wilcox and Michael Gwyngell in *Listen to the Wind*

differences in *When I Grow Up*. "Well, I'm trying to be," says Vicki Taylor's Emma. The arrival of Cameron Blakey's deliciously malevolent accountant, Pearson, threatening Gran with penury and the children with the workhouse, raises the melodramatic stakes. With the help of a friendly but haphazard

Special, affecting

stage reveals an unexpected depth as the lines of cornfield, fruit trees and emerald-green gates successively slide sideways. Louise Bolton is an attractive heroine, friendly but never cute, and her good companions are genial company. When the bucket of water is emptied over Olivia Carruthers, the Wicked Witch of the West, she sinks into the floor. Delight (and amazement) from the packed audience.

Out at Bagnor the Watermill has no facilities for lifting actors off beds and

In a second half stuffed with 14 songs, it is inevitable that the comic numbers prove the most effective scene-stealers. Blakey's dyspeptic Black Thunder Cloud naturally leads the way with his wonderfully titled lightning bolt songs. *Crash, Bang, Pop!* Meanwhile, Paula Wilcox's drab governess, Miss Lush, is comically transformed into an East End mermaid with "fabulous gills". To her falls the responsibility of rescuing the children, but not before we get several rattle-raising renditions of *I Used to Rock*.

Ultimately, *Listen to the Wind* is always going to be more remarkable for the gusto with which it is performed than the originality of its plot or songs. Accompanied by Michael Lavine on the piano, the latter are, however, delivered with a heart and humour that should see Crawford's show comfortably through the new year.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

sending them flying through windows. Since the one thing that children know about *Peter Pan* is that he flies, it was disappointing that the video insert Dilys Hamlett wanted to use in her production failed to work at the performance I saw.

Samantha Seager's Peter wears a reversed baseball cap, which would have given J.M. Barrie an attack of the vapours, but it's modern boyish after all. Still, it hardly chimes with the parental prayer, famously Edwardian, uttered before the flight on the ship: "We hope our sons will be like English gentlemen!" This is a production for the youngest children, who singled out for praise, as do I, Christopher Holt's dandy wish, as Hook, that he could fly, and his tippytoe attempts to do so.

JEREMY KINGSTON

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LAW

● NEXT WEEK: A LOOK BACK AT 1996

Give charities a chance

Restrictions on charities need reviewing.
Alison Dunn
explains why

The Christmas season traditionally raises the profile of charities in the public arena, from the sale of charity Christmas cards to carol concerts and to more specific seasonal fund-raising appeals.

But the activities of charities are not confined to Christmas, nor to doling out advent alms. Many charities are keen to sustain their profile in the public arena throughout the year, and to seek actively — through political channels — to tackle the cause of their beneficiaries' needs.

But to what extent can charities legally become political lobbyists, pursuing political activities? The situation is unclear, as was recently highlighted when the Prime Minister expressed concern over the involvement of charities in Real World, a coalition of aid, environmental and social justice groups.

In a letter to Save the Children, John Major accused the fund of signing up to a "largely political statement of objectives and policy proposals". His comments were prompted by Real World's Action Programme for Government, which advocates a £1 billion annual programme of public spending on housing, community projects and overseas aid, an "integrated transport programme", green energy and environmental policies, and a Bill of Rights.

But both Chris Smith, for Labour and Paddy Ashdown, for the Liberal Democrats, have welcomed the coalition agenda, and the Charity Commissioners have declared themselves satisfied that the charity members of the coalition have not overstepped the boundaries.

This focus on the legality of charities pursuing political objectives highlights the need for clarification in charity law, especially at a time of both regulation of the voluntary sector and pre-election political manoeuvring.

Under the law, charities are prohibited from engaging primarily in a political purpose. The rationale for this prohibition is that a political purpose fails to comply with the requirement of public benefit. The prohibition has some cogent reasons for denying charities the opportunity to take a primary role in the



Private giving to make up shortfalls: Is there a danger that charities will find their role too proscribed?

political arena, including the fact that the law ensures donor trust and prevents extreme political groups from gaining legitimacy under the guise of charitable status. It also prevents generous tax advantages being used in questionable political campaigns.

But even if political aims are not being recognised as charitable purposes, charities are nevertheless permitted to undertake a limited degree of political activity. Under the present law, charities may not be political organisations, nor show outright support for a particular political party, but they may nonetheless be involved in political activities, where such activities are ancillary to and in furtherance of the charity's overall charitable purpose.

The caveat clearly leaves room for charities to manoeuvre within the political arena and enables them to bring their experience of government policy to bear on the decision-making process. But the caveat also leaves room for widespread uncertainty over

the boundary of an ancillary political activity. Confusion is compounded by the fact that case law is vague as to acceptable and unacceptable conduct by charities. The Charity Commission has gone some way to rectify this lack of clarity by issuing guidelines on the involvement of charities in the political sphere. These guidelines, although not law in themselves, provide solid markers for trustees concerned to stay within the parameters of the law. The guidelines cover a range of situations straddling the sphere of political activity and political campaigning, and provide advice on influencing public opinion, supporting or opposing legislation, commenting on public issues and outlining the penalties for unacceptable political conduct by a charity.

The guidelines are valuable as indicators of acceptable conduct. But they do not remedy the underlying, and undermining, uncertainty of charity law. In a practical context, it remains difficult to distinguish between a political purpose and a political activity ancillary to a charitable purpose.

Even the Charity Commission acknowledges that "the dividing line between proper debate in the public arena and improper political activity is a difficult one to judge". That charities remain uncertain is evident from the recent *Report of the Commission on the Future of the Voluntary Sector*. This report admitted that the extent to which charities may contribute to the political arena had been "a frequent issue in the evidence submitted to the Commission".

This lack of clarity in the law is potentially harmful to the wider role that charities play in society. Certainly, explicit rules regarding acceptable political activities in guidelines such as those published by the Charity Commission, or via legislation, would be resisted by many.

the ability to assess directly the effectiveness of current Government policy or legislation on important issues such as poverty, education and health.

Yet in the climate of uncertainty which presently exists in charity law as to acceptable behaviour, the threat of penalties for unlawful political activity will tend to stifle participation in the political arena. Ultimately, this precludes the law's developing in a positive way, and may confine charities to a seasonal role.

● The author is lecturer in law, Newcastle Law School, University of Newcastle Upon Tyne.

6 Legislation might lay down inflexible rules?

Mandelson surprised

THE controversial MP, Peter Mandelson, the guest speaker at the Society of Labour Lawyers annual general meeting last week, was taken aback by the warm welcome from the group's chairman, James Goudie, QC. "I must say that that is the most neutral introduction I have had for a very long time," Labour's campaign co-ordinator quipped.

Before long, he was on more familiar ground, when he was forced to defend Jack Straw against complaints that the Shadow Home Secretary was concentrating his resources on being tough on crime, at the expense of Tony Blair's pledge "to be tough on the causes of crime".

Video request

THE Bar Council is to issue new guidelines to barristers on the measures they should take to ensure any child video evidence they are holding is locked away. The move follows an approach by the CPS, which asked the Bar Council to introduce new rules to protect such videos from getting in the wrong hands. There is concern that evi-

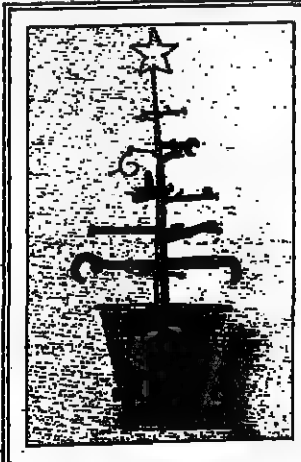
dence in child abuse cases is being circulated within prisons, although the Criminal Bar Association has emphasised that there is no evidence that barristers have been involved in breaches of security.

More than equal

MANY PEOPLE have been impressed by the Bar Council's drive to stamp out discrimination at the Bar, represented by an equality code issued to chambers earlier this year. Now there are signs that

it is moving on to the offensive by encouraging elements of positive discrimination.

Evidence comes from December's *Bar News*, the Bar Council's bulletin, in an item urging unsuccessful applicants for Assistant Recordships to be patient if they want to find out why they have been rejected. The item adds: "Their current exercise is so woman-intensive, the Lord Chancellor's department is not going to have the human resources to deal with the unsuccessful until the new year."



The art of Christmas

COLLYER-BRISTOW has commissioned a young contemporary artist to produce an alternative Christmas tree once again. The tree, by Mick Kirby Geddes, a Yorkshire sculptor, is made from welded scrap metal and is on display at the law firm's high-quality art gallery at its Holborn premises.

Editor quits

AFTER five years as Editor of *Solicitors Journal*, where she rose to the position of publishing director at *FT Law & Tax*, Marie Staunton is returning to the voluntary sector to take a position with Unicef.

Chris Stibbs, *FT Law & Tax*'s managing director, says: "Marie has played an integral part in our development over the past five years and will be missed by her colleagues."

● JUDGES are working even harder than everybody thought. Several circuit judges have pointed out that they do not sit 200 days a year. They have a duty to sit for no fewer than 210 days — which in practice, they say, means many more.

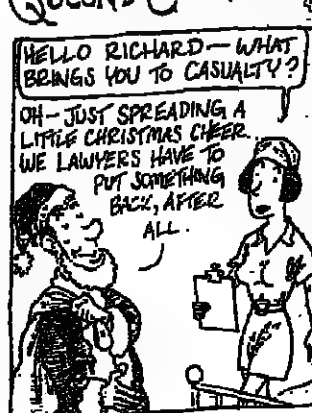
Mears News

APART FROM producing a succession of pithy media fact sheets criticising the policies of Tony Blair, the Law Society President, Martin Mears, Mr Girling's controversial predecessor, has lately been adopting a relatively low profile. Behind the scenes, however, he has been busy putting together his own national news magazine, to be published soon.

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An inspector calls

Sir Edward Coke wrote in his *Institutes of the Laws of England* in 1628 that "a man's house is his castle". Exceptions authorised by Parliament in recent decades have left the castle far from impregnable to officials. But our legal system has required necessary safeguards to protect privacy. It has shared the emotion expressed by Lord Chief Justice Pratt in 1763: "to enter a man's house by virtue of a nameless warrant in order to procure evidence is worse than the Spanish Inquisition". Clause 89 of the Police Bill, now being considered by Parliament, is a threat to the principles of our unwritten constitution.

If enacted, it would confer extensive powers on the police to bug, enter and search premises. Entry on, or interference with, property or with wireless telegraphy would be lawful if authorised by a Chief Constable (or other relevant person) who thinks it could be of substantial value in the prevention or detection of serious crime, and if the action achieves what cannot reasonably be done by other means.

"Serious crime" is very broadly defined by Clause 89 to mean any crime involving the use of violence, or resulting in substantial financial gain, or conduct by a large number of people in pursuit of a common purpose, or an offence for which a person would be sent to prison for three years or more. It is therefore particularly important to ensure that there are proper safeguards to protect individual rights. The committee stage debate in the House of Lords at the end of last month shows that there are two fundamental objections to the drafting of Clause 89 which the Government needs to address.

The first concern is that the intrusive action on private property does not need to be authorised by a judge, but can be decided upon by the police alone. As Lord Browne-Wilkinson pointed out during the debate, until now "the only right enjoyed by the State to invade property is under the warrant of a court" (with the exception of action by the security services). In other Commonwealth countries, a prior judicial warrant is recognised to be an indispensable safeguard of individual rights and a necessary check on abuse of power. The Government's explanation for adopting a different approach in the Police Bill is that this is "peculiarly an operational matter", and that to involve the judiciary "would be perceived to be a threat to the traditional impartiality of judges, placing them too firmly in the law-enforcement camp".

This will surprise judges and magistrates, who already have responsibility for granting,

or refusing, search warrants, and who frequently take decisions relating to police conduct, such as deciding on the admissibility of evidence, without anyone seriously suggesting that this undermines their independence. Indeed, a primary function of an impartial judiciary is to ensure that broad powers which impede on fundamental liberties are not abused, however "operational" they may be. The second defect in Clause 89 is that it recognises no exception for legal professional privilege. It is a basic principle of English law that people should be able to consult their lawyers in confidence, knowing that what they say will not be disclosed without their consent.

As Lord Taylor of Gosforth explained in a House of Lords judgment in 1995, this is "a fundamental condition on which the administration of justice as a whole rests". If people fear that their conversations may be bugged by the police, they are not going to tell the whole story, and so they are not going to get proper advice, when they visit their solicitor's office or their barrister's chambers.

The Government has two unconvincing reasons for refusing to include an exception in Clause 89 for lawyers' premises. First, it says that this "would alert criminals to the sole purpose of furthering their illegal activities and frustrating the purpose of the Bill". The short answer is that there is no professional privilege if there is a conspiracy between lawyer and client to do more than give and receive legal advice. Secondly, the Government says that Chief Constables can be trusted to use their powers wisely. But if Parliament does not intend to authorise objectionable conduct, it should say so, in order to prevent future abuse of power.

To combat serious crime, the police may well need new powers. But such powers must be subject to necessary safeguards. If Clause 89 were to be enacted in its current form, the absence of judicial control and the frustration of professional privilege would lead to inevitable condemnation by the European Court of Human Rights.

All judges should make plain to the Government that they reject the suggestion that their impartiality would be threatened if prior judicial authorisation were required. And all barristers and solicitors should express their disgust at the suggestion that Parliament may authorise the bugging of their premises while they are giving legal advice to clients.

● The author is a practising barrister and a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.



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AMERICAN FOOTBALL: PACKERS CHASE HOME-FIELD ADVANTAGE

Cowboys shrug off scandal to shoot for Super Bowl

BY OLIVER HOIT

JUST as tough and about half as endearing, Dallas Cowboys are starting to resemble American football's version of *The Terminator*. Knocked down and dragged through the grinder, disabled temporarily when vital parts are ripped off, the good guys persist in thinking Dallas are down and out. Yet they keep coming back.

On Sunday, the Cowboys shrugged off the latest scandal to blight their angel-laden year, the suspension of Leon Lett for drug abuse, to beat the much-admired New England Patriots 12-6 in Texas, win their fifth National Football Conference (NFC) eastern division title in succession and qualify for the play-offs.

Despite the loss of Lett, one of the best tacklers in the sport, the Cowboys allowed the most productive offence in the National Football League (NFL) only two field goals. They will have to win on the road if they are to reach a second successive Super Bowl at the end of January, but now that the competition is reaching its knock-out stage, few will bet against them.

Even the Cowboys, though, might struggle in Green Bay in the middle of January and the Packers moved one step closer to clinching home-field advantage in the NFC throughout the play-offs on Sunday when they trounced Detroit Lions 31-3 at the Pontiac Silverdome, courtesy of a 92-yard punt return by Desmond Howard and more inspired passing from their quarterback, Brett Favre.

If the Packers slip up against Minnesota next week, then home advantage could pass to either San Francisco 49ers or Carolina Panthers, the surprise team of the year. Both had convincing wins at the weekend.

The Panthers, in only their second year in the NFL, capitalised on their thrilling victory over the 49ers in San Francisco ten days ago with a 27-16 win over Baltimore Ravens in Charlotte to take their



Bam Morris, the Baltimore running back, ploughs into a Carolina roadblock

record for the season to 11 wins and four defeats.

In the American Football Conference (AFC), Denver Broncos welcomed back their quarterback, John Elway, and banished the memories of the recent 41-6 rout by the Packers with a 24-19 win over Oakland Raiders at Mile High Stadium. Elway, who missed the defeat in Green Bay with a sore hamstring, passed for a total of 206 yards to end the Raiders' chances of reaching the play-offs.

The Broncos will be joined in the AFC half of the play-offs by New England and Pittsburgh, while Buffalo, Indianapolis, Kansas City and Jacksonville will have to wait until the end of the regular season on Sunday to discover if they have clinched wild-card berths.

NFL DETAILS

RESULTS: Philadelphia 21		New York Jets 20	
Chicago 27		San Diego 14	
Carolina 27		Baltimore 16	
Detroit 31		Green Bay 31	
Dallas 12		New England 3	
New Orleans 17		San Francisco 3	
Atlanta 27		St Louis 24	
Pittsburgh 15		San Francisco 25	
Minnesota 28		Tampa Bay 10	
Washington 28		Denver 24	
Oakland 15		Cincinnati 21	
Houston 13		Indianapolis 24	
Kansas City 19		FAVOURITES	
San Francisco		New York Giants	
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FOOTBALL: KLINSMANN MAY FOLLOW ERIKSSON TO EWOOD PARK

Revolutionary ready to march on Ribble Valley

When a man has lived for 15 years in Mediterranean climes and has helped the wealthy club owners of Lisbon, Rome, Florence and Genoa to spend their millions, what on earth could be the charms of an old Lancastrian cotton town such as Blackburn?

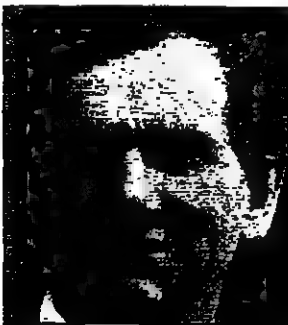
The confirmation yesterday morning that Blackburn Rovers will indeed have Sven Goran Eriksson to manage their team from the end of this season, or before, was followed last night by speculation that he might hire Jürgen Klinsmann, of Bayern Munich, to assist him on the field in reclaiming the glories that Jack Walker's millions brought to Ewood Park.

Klinsmann, so swiftly back from Lisbon himself after Germany had drawn 0-0 there in a World Cup qualifying game on Saturday, has repeated in public his growing despair with Germany's leading club.

He and Giovanni Trapattoni, the Italian who coaches Bayern, do not speak the same sporting language: Klinsmann is bred on attack, Trapattoni is a thoroughbred of defence. Given that Blackburn have announced that more of Walker's money will be spent in anticipation of Eriksson's arrival, the club would do well to review a tape of Germany's visit to the Stadium of Light.

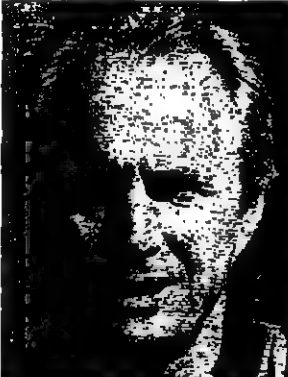
Klinsmann looked tired and relied on his young partner, Fredi Bobic, to do most of his

ROB HUGHES



Overseas View

running. Nottingham Forest have reportedly been working on a £30,000-per-week offer to the Germany captain. Everton are also more than interested. British spectators enjoyed his company once and, at 32,



Eriksson in control

may relish his return. Meanwhile, Eriksson is on his way: only the timing of his release, at the behest of Sampdoria, his Genoa club, is to be determined.

Eriksson is possibly aware of the serenity of the Ribble Valley that surrounds Blackburn. Or there may be other enticements to a man already wealthy through his travels in coaching. Maybe the phrase "where there's muck there's brass" appeals to this Swede whose English is perfect. Or maybe it is the challenge of helping English football to come out of the dark ages, the challenge that has already brought Ruud Geulink and Arsène Wenger to London.

Three foreigners here to coach. Their task abroad was, as Eriksson often said, to coax "commitment" into technically gifted individuals. Here, indubitably, commitment exists in extremis. It is the knowledge of footballers on the continent, the ability to buy players who should be beacons of light to native, physically-inclined workers, that puts these newcomers in the millionaire pay bracket.

Eriksson comes highly recommended by David Platt, who, incidentally, is trying to rediscover his form under Wenger at Arsenal. "I thought Eriksson was absolutely superb," Platt said of his time as a Sampdoria player. "Win, lose or draw, he would shake every player's hand: he had respect for the players, the way he got his ideas across. He was

always in control." Such words are not echoed in Italy, not after his time in charge at AS Roma, where he left under the cloud of insinuations that players were not motivated by him, that they were not giving their best.

However, there are similarities between Eriksson, of Blackburn, and Wenger, of Arsenal. Each turned to training players in their twenties, realising that they were educators rather than spectacular performers. Eriksson had been a defender or wing half in Swedish semi-professional football, but quickly coached IFK Gothenburg to the championship of his homeland and to the Uefa Cup. Abruptly, he took up the first of two spells at Benfica and, in 1992, during his second spell there, helped eliminate an ex-posed Arsenal in the European Cup.

Like Wenger, he was sought by an English club while still abroad and still under contract. Like Wenger, he dealt with the public knowledge of his impending defection ably and with a considerable grasp of public relations.

Meanwhile, committed as he is to Sampdoria, he enjoyed a breathtaking victory on the eve of Blackburn's admission that his future was theirs. At the San Siro, Sampdoria came from 3-1 down to beat Internazionale 4-3. That provoked howls of abuse, the hurrying of obscenities and stones in the direction of Roy Hodgson, Inter's English coach, who turned down an offer from Blackburn before Walker's men turned to Eriksson.

It will not be easy for Eriksson to change the physical ways, or the present struggles, of Blackburn, nor does he venture into England with quite the acceptance that was already his when Italy called. Eriksson, should he succeed in this island, will be the first Swede since the Vikings to do so.

George Weah, the Fifa World Footballer of the Year, was given a six-match ban by Uefa. European football's governing body, yesterday for headbutting Jorge Costa, of FC Porto, in AC Milan's European Cup Champions' League match last month.



Facing up to the disappointment of not winning the BBC Sports Personality of the Year award on Sunday night was made easier for Steven Redgrave, right, yesterday, when he was presented with the Sports Writers' Association's award for Sportsman of the Year. The veteran oarsman, who won

his fourth Olympic gold medal in Atlanta in the summer, could have been forgiven for seeing double by the end of the ceremony, when, just as at the BBC event, he was named in the Team of the Year with Matthew Pinsent. Left, his colleague in the coxed pairs.

RUGBY UNION

Ashton's future in doubt

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

A SMOKESCREEN surrounded last night the immediate future of one of the leading figures at Bath, English rugby union's champion club. A statement appeared to confirm the status of Brian Ashton, the chief coach, yet the very fact that it had to be made cast doubts over his long-term future.

In the week before Bath begin the defence of the Pilkington Cup — against London Irish on Saturday — Ashton is on a week's holiday while John Hall, the director of rugby, would only issue a terse statement confirming that the coach, who was back to coach in England in the mid-1980s, "remains an employee of Bath Rugby Club".

There has been speculation that the relationship between the two men, once that of coach and player, had dwindled now that both are involved in management. "At this moment in time, Bath and I have not parted company," Ashton, who gave up his

teaching career last summer to become a full-time employee of Bath, said. Preparation of the cup side now devolves upon Andy Robinson, the flanker, who is still a member of the playing squad, and John Palmer, the former centre.

It has already been a difficult season for Bath, whose primary ambition — victory in the Heineken Cup — subsided when they lost in the quarter-finals to Cardiff. After three defeats, their league championship is in the balance and the glass was removed from their outstanding display against Harlequins on December 7 by accusations of rowdiness in the city centre the same evening, when police had to be called to a café.

Meanwhile, Newbury must play their postponed fourth-round Pilkington Cup tie with London at Regent's Park on Saturday. The winner of which meets Leicester on Saturday. The Rugby Football Union turned down an appeal for a further postponement by

Newbury, nine of whose players have been affected over the last fortnight by a serious bacterial skin infection.

Five of those players have not recovered and Newbury may be forced to field second-choice tight-five forwards. The original postponement from November 23 was because the club's players were required for the RFU divisional programme, while the union's dispute with the leading clubs was at its height.

The Scottish Rugby Union has agreed to play South Africa at Murrayfield next December and will send a party to South Africa this summer. A five-match programme will coincide with the British Isles tour, which will deprive the Scots of leading players, while the South Africans — who left for home yesterday following their successful tour of Argentina, France and Wales — will return to Britain to play England on November 29 and Scotland on December 6.

MCC wins backing for media centre

THE imaginative project at Lord's Nursery End, to be known as the NatWest Media Centre, was given the blessing of MCC members yesterday (Jack Bailey writes).

The overwhelming majority depicted by the overall vote (both postal and at yesterday's special meeting) was 6,993 in favour of the new centre, 1,288 against. At the meeting itself, which lasted 2½ hours, the voting in the hall resulted in approval by 152 votes to 61.

This means that Lord's will have in place by April 1998 a centre capable of housing the world's television, radio and other media well in advance of the World Cup final of 1999.

Durdle door

Ice hockey: Great Britain's prospects of reaching the next stage of the 1998 Winter Olympic Games qualifying process were lifted yesterday when Darren Durdle, the defenceman, was cleared to play in the decisive group game with Switzerland in Sheffield tomorrow.

It was feared Britain could be penalised the two points from the 5-0 victory over Slovenia when Durdle made his debut after questions were asked as to when the Canadian-born player received his British passport.

Splash for cash

Swimming: Britain is demanding that top swimmers be paid to attend the second European short-course championships if the event is to be staged in Sheffield. The city is the only bidder for the 1998 event and, with the Amateur Swimming Association, is insisting that the European Swimming League offer prizes to winners in all 38 events to ensure the best possible entry.

Easy ride

Rugby union: The draw for the sixth round of the Swalec Cup gave Pontypridd, the holders, an easy entry to the competition. They must travel to Felinfoel, the junior West Walian club. There are two all first-division ties, between Newport and Cardiff, and Caerphilly and Llanelli.

DRINK: Rhydnyr v Ammanford v Theodry; Llanidloes v Pyle; Pontypridd v Rhinoceros; South Wales Police v Blackwood v Haverhill; Newcastle Bryn v Rhydnyr v Glynneath; Glynneath v Pyle; Pyle v Pontypridd; Pontypridd v Carmarthen Town; Swansea v Darnley; Newport v Cardiff; Walsley v South Wales v Abercromby v Ystradgynlais; Cross Keys v Cardiff Institute of Sport; Caerphilly v Llanelli; Neath v Abercromby; Abercromby v Ebbw Vale; Rhydnyr v Newport; Felinfoel v Pontypridd. Time to be played January 25.

Jones fails to see funny side of fine

VINNIE JONES, the Wimbledon midfielder player, has been fined a week's wages by the FA Carling Premiership club after a supposedly humorous newspaper article backfired on Saturday (Russell Kempson writes). Jones has also donated his £2,000 fee for the article, which jokingly assessed the characters of his team-mates, to the players' pool.

Jones missed Wimbledon's 1-0 win against Blackburn Rovers on Saturday. Instead, he played for Wales in their World Cup qualifying match against Turkey in Cardiff, which ended in a goalless

draw. He returned to training yesterday and apologised to his colleagues. "It was meant to be a joke, a Christmassy, pull-your-leg stunt," he said, "but it's gone wrong. I can only say that I am deeply sorry."

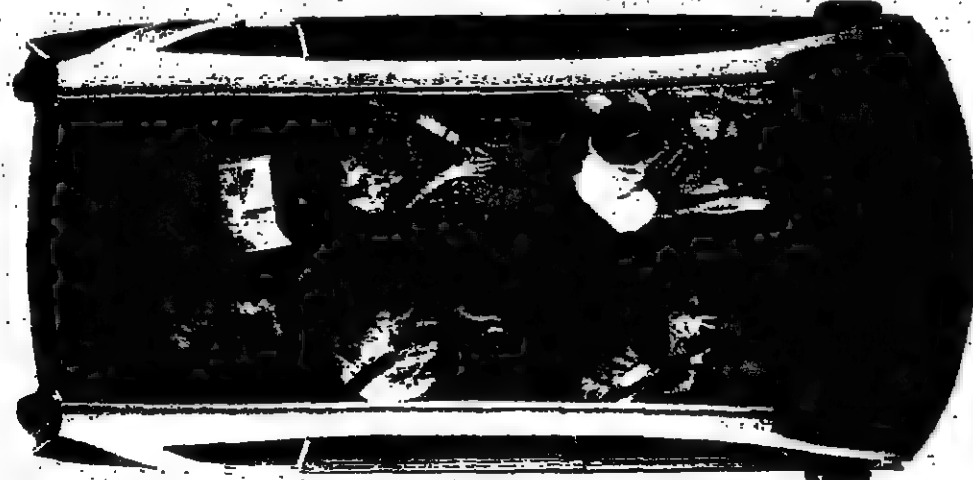
Joe Kinnear, the Wimbledon manager, declined to comment. At the weekend, when the article appeared, he labelled it "disgusting". Sam Hammam, the Wimbledon owner, said that the club now accepted that Jones intended his comments to be treated light-heartedly. "Wimbledon play with ten men and Vinnie Jones,"

Hammam said. "In many respects, they are ahead of him from a technical and footballing angle. What Vinnie provides is leadership."

The Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) is to hold an inquiry into crowd trouble at the Bristol City v Bristol Rovers Nationwide League second division derby at Ashton Gate on Sunday. Spectators invaded the pitch after Rovers had equalised in injury time and, at the end, several Rovers players had to run for the tunnel to escape pursuing City supporters. The Football Association is launching a separate inquiry.

AN EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION THE TIMES

Win a £17,200 Toyota Picnic FFV



The Times offers readers the chance to win every family's dream car — the new Toyota Picnic Family Fun Vehicle which will be going on sale in the UK for the first time in January. The six-seater has been designed with the aim of making travelling with children a happier and more comfortable experience for everyone in the car.

While working on the new car's development, Toyota commissioned a report by a leading psychologist to investigate the psychology of family travel. The report identified that although it may not be possible to change children's behaviour on long car journeys, there are certain fundamentals that ensure more peaceful family travel.

The Toyota Picnic Family Fun Vehicle has a list of impressive features including six individual seats, all with 3-point seat belts, giving children their own space to minimise the

risk of irritation. There are a total of 17 different seat combinations and a power outlet in the rear — essential for the children's personal stereos on long car journeys. Safety features include dual air bags, side impact beams, crumple zones and an impact energy absorbing body frame structure.

HOW TO ENTER

For your chance to win this superb vehicle, collect four differently numbered tokens from the seven appearing in *The Times* between December 14-21, 1996. Post them with the completed entry form to: The Times/Toyota Picnic Competition, Ashentree Court, London EC88 8NG. The closing date is first post Friday January 17, 1997.

THE TIMES
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picnic
TOKEN 3

TERMS AND CONDITIONS 1. The car to be won is the Picnic GL (interior) and cannot be exchanged for a different model or cash alternative. 2. The car will be presented ready to drive, except for petrol and road tax, which will be the responsibility of the winner. 3. The winner may be required to be photographed for publicity purposes. 4. Acceptance of all the rules is a condition of entry. 5. For the name of the winner, please send a SAE to the address above. 6. The car will be awarded at the winner's nearest Toyota dealership. 7. The competition is open to all Times readers over 17 years of age. 8. The winner will be the person who correctly completes the competition question and who, in the opinion of the independent judges, submits the best SAE. 9. Normal Times Newspaper competition rules apply.

CHANGING TIMES

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT
This hand was played by Vittorio di Silvio, of Italy, in the Olympiad Mixed Teams.

Dealer South	Love all	IMP's
♠ 10 7 4 2 ♥ A ♦ K Q J 10 8 ♣ A 10 7 6 5 4 3 2	♠ 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 ♥ K Q J 10 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 ♦ A K Q J 10 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 ♣ A K Q J 10 8 7 6 5 4 3 2	♠ 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 ♥ K Q J 10 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 ♦ A K Q J 10 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 ♣ A K Q J 10 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Contract: Six Spades by South. Lead: King of hearts

South opened One Club and West overcalled One Heart. After a negative double by North, North-South found their way to Six Spades.

How would you set about the contract after winning the ace of hearts? You have three tricks in spades, one in hearts, five in diamonds and one in clubs. That means you need to take two heart ruffs in dummy to make up the twelve tricks. You also have to ensure that you have drawn trumps before you run the diamonds.

In a pairs event, you might play a club to the ace at trick two, ruff a heart, diamond to the ace, ruff a heart, and finally play a spade to the ace and draw trumps. That way you would make thirteen tricks if the spades break 3-2. You will find the 4-1 break makes the hand unmanage-

able on that line of play. At teams scoring you should ensure you make your contract, and Di Silvio solved the problem neatly. At trick two he ducked a spade. He now had three entries to his hand to ruff two hearts, and was still in control to draw all the trumps before running the diamonds.

□ In the US Gold Cup final, held in Peebles at the weekend, Andrew Dyson's team (Glyn Liggins, Peter Crouch, Steve Lodge, Graham Kirby, John Armstrong) beat Andrew Macnair's team (Tim Rees, Graham Horsley, Roger Gibbons, Alan Kay, Jerry Cope) by 157 IMPs to 89.

□ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD MATCHING

FLEMENSIRKTH
a. The North Sea
b. Entertaining an outcast
c. A rout

GROMWELL
a. George Cromwell
b. A breed of pony
c. A medicinal herb

FINGAN
a. A coffee cup
b. To forge a signature
c. A Highland bard

GANTELLAGE
a. A naval crane
b. Wine duty
c. A rable land

Answers on page 38

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Level contest

The elite tournament at Las Palmas continues with an even field. At the halfway stage 50 per cent of the players share first place and only 1½ points divides first from last. In the fifth round Karpov and Kasparov played a quiet draw which enabled Vassily Ivanchuk, the Ukrainian grandmaster, to move into the joint lead.

White: Vassily Ivanchuk
Black: Vladimir Kramnik
Las Palmas, December 1996

White	Black
1. d4	Nb6
2. c4	g6
3. Nc3	Bg7
4. e4	d6
5. Ng2	0-0
6. f3	c5
7. d5	e6
8. Ng3	exd5
9. cxd5	Nd7
10. Be2	a6
11. g4	h5
12. Bg5	Qe8
13. Qd2	Nf7
14. Bh6	Qe6
15. Bg7	Qc7
16. Nf1	g5
17. exd5	gxf5
18. Nd3	Kf8
19. Ne4	Qf6
20. 0-0	Rf8
21. Rfe1	b5
22. a5	a5

23. Nc5	b4
24. Nc6	Be6
25. Nc7	Rne8
26. Rne2	Rg8
27. Nc6	Rf8
28. Ne6	Ra8
29. Rf1	Ra2
30. Nf4	Qg5
31. Nf4	Qg5
32. Ra6	Nd6
33. Ne7	Rf6
34. Ng6+	Black resigns



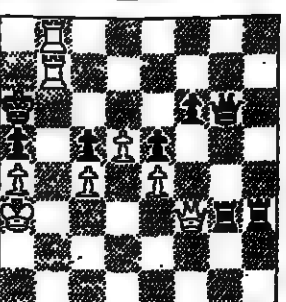
Times book

The Times Winning Moves 2 contains 240 chess puzzles from international grandmaster Raymond Keene's daily column in *The Times*, and is available now from bookshops or from B. T. Batsford Ltd (tel: 01376 321276 at £6.99 plus postage and packing).

□ Raymond Keene writes on chess every Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WINNING MOVE

White to play. This position is from the game Volok — Golod, Czech Republic, 1994. White's queen is caught in a pin along the third rank and it looks as if he must settle for a perpetual check draw with his rooks. Can he do any better?



Solution on page 38

Goalkeepers take their chance in the spotlight

Times writers give their Christmas selections of the best in sporting literature in 1996

Goalkeepers take their chance in the spotlight

GHOSTED autobiographies were once the staple dress of sports publishing. "I take 25 days to write a book," one ghost proclaimed proudly. "Ten days taping and then a chapter a day for 14 days." It showed.

Nowadays, football's ghosts are more upmarket. This season's two heavyweight autobiographies, by Kenny Dalglish and Jack Charlton, are ghosted by, respectively, Henry Winter, of *The Daily Telegraph*, and Peter Byrne, of *The Irish Times*, a whimsical stylist.

Yet both have the main problem of ghosts, to retain the flavour of the man. Perhaps surprisingly, Byrne, an Irishman, makes the better fist of it, capturing Charlton's trenchant style. Winter went to school and played football in Scotland, but even that proved little help in recapturing Dalglish's more staccato one-liners on the page.

Between them, though, Dalglish and Charlton have been at the centre of football in the past 30 years and their tales

reflect that. Dalglish writes angrily about Heysel, moving about Hillsborough and openly about the leaving of Liverpool. Charlton, as always, is forced. He is revealing about his relationship with his brother, Bobby, but is perhaps at his best talking about his childhood.

Autobiographies apart, football publishing is thriving. This year, there is perhaps no "great book", such as *Football Against the Enemy*, but there is a wealth of good ones. Managers, chairmen and goalkeepers get a book apiece, of varying quality. The one on chairmen, *Soccer Czars*, talks to the first XI, except Martin Edwards, of Manchester United, and Sir John Hall, of Newcastle United, and gets some fascinating material, but Jason Tomas is too soft on the raging egos on view. George Silk, a psychologist, also has some interesting interviews, but he does not get to Alex Ferguson, Dalglish, George Graham, Kevin Keegan or Roy Evans, which undermines his book, *I Think I'll Manage*.



Dalglish: heavyweight

Fortunately, the eccentric selections in the *Dream Team* series never have to play, but they make great interviews, particularly Jim White's *Always in the Running*, on Manchester United. White is a good interviewer and a beguiling writer, but what can you do with someone who selects Willie Morgan as a wing back and says that the manager who gave Neil Ruddock an England cap is a great judge of a player?

Jeremy Novick, the author of *Winning Their Spurs* in the same series, would never make that mistake about Terry Venables. His book, with its preponderance of early Eighties players, might be better titled *The Nearly Team*, as opposed to Alex Fynn's tome, *Dream On*, on Tottenham last season. Informative, but I preferred the story of football on the breadline, Derrick Allsop's tale of Rochdale's season, *Kicking in the Wind*.

However, for Tottenham supporters, there is outstanding nostalgia, the story of perhaps the greatest ever English club side, Danny Blanchflower's double-winners. Of the other excellent offerings, *Warrior Wanderers*, the story of the Bolton team that joined up en masse and fought the war (1939-45 that is) together, and *Bogota Bandit*, the story of Charlie Mitten's trip to play in Colombia, also tap into football's new and delightful nostalgia market.

In the end, the book of the year is Nick Hazlewood's study of a strange breed, the goalkeeper. It is thin on the greats, but, from nightmares to betting scams, from Willie Foulke to René Higuita, it is riveting reading.

□ *In the Way - Goalkeepers: A Breed Apart*, by Nick Hazlewood (Mainstream, £14.99).
□ *Bogota Bandit - The Outlaw Life of Charlie Mitten*, by Nick Hazlewood (Mainstream, £14.99).
□ *Warrior Wanderers - A Football Team at War*, by Tim Purcell and Mike Gething (Mainstream, £14.99).
□ *The Double*, by Ken Ferris (Two Heads Publishing, £9.99).
□ *Kicking in the Wind*, by Derrick Allsop (Headline, £14.99).
□ *Jack Charlton: The autobiography*, with Peter Byrne (Partridge Press, £16.99).
□ *Dalglish: My Autobiography*, with Henry Winter (Hodder & Stoughton, £16.99).
□ *Soccer Czars*, by Jason Tomas (Mainstream, £14.99).
□ *I Think I'll Manage*, by George Silk (Headline, £15.99).
□ *Dream On*, by Alex Fynn and H. Davidson (Simon & Schuster, £14.99).
□ *Always in the Running* (Dream Team series), by Jim White (Mainstream, £14.99).
□ *Winning their Spurs* (Dream Team series), by Jeremy Novick (Mainstream, £14.99).

PETER BALL



Seles tells of her depression and recurring nightmares as she fought her way back to the top after being stabbed

Serving aces en route to a fortune

DURING the festive season, all thoughts of sport and fitness are usually put firmly to one side, but in the annual crop of tennis books, there is enough to keep even the most devout couch potato in touch with the game, even if picking up a racket and playing seems out of the question.

For those whose playing days are a long-distant memory, there is *David Lloyd: How to Succeed in Business While Really Trying*. Now there are people who love Lloyd and people who loathe him, but none can get away from the fact that he is an inveterate enthusiast and workaholic.

The book covers Lloyd's rise from promising junior to reasonable player to multi-millionaire. Written by Richard Evans, it describes how Lloyd built up his empire of tennis clubs from scratch and eventually sold them to Whitbread for a fortune. In between, it gives the Lloyd view of

business — and how to make it big — of tennis and of life in general. It is worth the read. The British Davis Cup captain — and a chap who owns three Ferraris — is not in the habit of pulling his punches.

Monica Seles also has her own view of the world. Up until 1993, that world consisted of doing everything in her power to be the best tennis player alive. Then, in Hamburg, Günther Parche stopped her in her tracks, stabbing her in the back during a quarter-final match, and consigning her to more than two years in the wilderness as she struggled against the injury, depression and recurring nightmares.

Monica: From Fear to Victory, written with Nancy Ann Richardson, is the account of how Seles came back from that day in Hamburg. It is, at times, a

remarkably self-indulgent tome, but does at least explain why it took Seles so long to come to terms with what had happened and how that battle still affects her.

The Official Wimbledon Annual 1996 also has mention of Seles. This day-by-day record of the championships is written by John Parsons with pictures from some of the best tennis photographers on the circuit. It is a valuable addition to any tennis buff's shelves.

In the same vein, *Slam!* compiled by Eugene L. Scott, the editor of *Tennis Week*, hopes to provide the same sort of record for all four grand slam events. The book gives an overview of the four big tournaments of the year. It is available at specialist tennis bookshops.

Much as it galls a journalist to say it, a picture can say a

thousand words and for any tennis enthusiast *Visions of Tennis* is a great present.

□ *David Lloyd: How to Succeed in Business While Really Trying*, by Richard Evans (Bloomsbury, £17.99).

□ *Monica: From Fear to Victory*, Monica Seles with Nancy Ann Richardson (Harper Collins, £14.99).

□ *The Official Wimbledon Annual 1996*, by John Parsons (Hazelton, £19.99).

□ *Slam!* compiled by Eugene L. Scott (available from The Tennis Bookshop, West Gate, Moyles Court, Nr Ringwood, Hants, 01425 480518, £35 plus postage and packing).

□ *Visions of Tennis*, produced by Allsport (Quiller Press, £16.95).

ALIX RAMSAY

No passes in volume on specialist knowledge

WHAT a pity that television's *Mastermind* series ends next year and no further applicants will be considered. *Cycling: Facts and Feats* would have been an ideal primer for anyone seeking high points in the specialist subject category.

Jeremy Evans has researched the subject well, laying down a solid foundation in the opening section with a mix of information about the evolution of the bicycle from its beginnings in 1861 and, seven years later, cycle racing, to the present day.

Brevity is the keynote of Evans's style throughout, using a multitude of four or five-liners to present a fascinating history of the fastest, the longest, the highest and other categories.

Some achievements recorded might be considered freakish or unnecessary (in May 1990, a Peter Rosendahl rode a bicycle backwards for 74.75 kilometres in 9hr 25min), but the compiler has done his best to give lightweight information.

The world's three leading Tours — France, Italy and Spain — are well-documented, and there are welcome potted biographies of The Greats, ranging from Marshall "Major" Taylor (born 1878) to the present world champion, and record-holder from Great Britain, Chris Boardman (born 1968).

Also highly readable is William Fotheringham's *Cycle Racing: How to Train, Race and Win*. The author's canvas is broad and will appeal to all levels of achievement.

□ *Cycling: Facts and Feats*, by Jeremy Evans (Guinness Publishing, £13.99).
□ *Cycle Racing: How to Train, Race and Win*, by William Fotheringham (A & C Black, £13.99).

PETER BRYAN

Watered-down account of poolside dramas

IF YOU want to seek out a sporting fairy-tale, dip into *Gold*, the biography of Michelle Smith — but go cautiously. This is the story of the 26-year-old who made giant strides in Atlanta to become a triple Olympic champion and unleash a tide of jubilation in Ireland that not even Jack Charlton and his lads could have hoped for.

Written by Cathal Dervan, a journalist, in collaboration with Smith, the book offers a romantic view of its subject and her immense progress after her coaching was taken over by the man she was to marry, Eric de Bruin. The Dutch discus thrower became her mentor after the 1992 Olympic Games and was suspended from athletics for four years in 1993 after he tested positive for steroids.

Smith reassesses her oft-quoted view that her success is solely the result of hard work. The book does not deal very much with the drugs controversy in Atlanta or offer evidence to support De

Bruin's contention that he was an innocent victim of drugs testing.

The book alleges that American journalists were alone in questioning how Smith had achieved a progression like no other in the history of her sport. In truth, such issues were raised by swimmers, coaches, medical

experts and journalists from dozens of nations and had been raised long before Atlanta. The question of whether Smith received medical help was put to her forcibly in Atlanta, even though she has never tested positive for drugs.

Dervan's account is watered-down and sickly sweet.

□ *Gold - a triple champion's story*, Michelle Smith, with Cathal Dervan, (Mainstream Publishing Company, £14.99).

CRAIG LORD

Leap into dark side of search for gold

FOR MOST Americans, the defining moment of the Atlanta Olympic Games was not the 200 metres world record of Michael Johnson nor the fourth long jump gold medal for Carl Lewis. It was the instant when Bela Karolyi carried Kerri Strug into the gymnastics hall to receive her gold medal. She had defied a badly damaged ankle to land cleanly from a vault and help the United States to victory in the women's team event.

Although it was almost midnight, the occasion was seen by 99 million American television viewers. Strug immediately became a national celebrity, the latest in a line of competitors to achieve that distinction — many of whom have been coached by Karolyi.

His methods and those of many successful coaches, both in gymnastics and ice skating, are questioned in the book, *Little Girls in Pretty Boxes*. This is the other side of the story of Olympic glory, revealing what has happened to those American gymnasts who have died or been grievously harmed, either emotionally or physically, in their desire for success.

The thesis of Joan Ryan, the author, is clear. "It is about the

elite child athlete and the American obsession with winning that has produced a training environment wherein results are bought at any cost, no matter how devastating."

What makes gymnastics and ice skating so disturbing is that the competitors are immature girls. The stories of eating disorders and injuries make harrowing reading. As Ryan says: "There is no place in elite women's gymnastics for women." The sport is dominated by tiny teenagers and, until the world governing body imposes a lower weight limit, it will have to bear some responsibility for the harm that is being done.

On a more cheering note, *Empire Games*, subtitled *The British Invention of 20th Century Sport*, illuminates how this country spread so many sports to other countries. The author is engagingly committed in detail, but detached in judgment, pointing out how the ethos of the Empire often held back the development of sport in the home country.

Trevor Leggett's eminence in judo is unquestioned and he has always stressed the importance of its mental training as much as its physical aspects. His collection of stories in the Zen tradition should be read by everyone involved in the Japanese martial arts.

□ *Little Girls in Pretty Boxes*, by Joan Ryan (The Women's Press, £8.99).
□ *Empire Games*, by Roger Hutchinson (Mainstream Publishing, £13.99).
□ *The Dragon and Other Judo Stories in the Zen Tradition*, compiled by Trevor Leggett (Ippon Books, £5.99).

JOHN GOODBODY

The day Todd was taken on terror ride

IT IS a relief to learn that even Mark Todd, the most gifted three-day-event rider the sport has seen, has experienced the terror of being run away with on a horse. It happened when the dual Olympic gold-medal winner was asked to event a friend's Grade A showjumper. As soon as they set out on the cross country, the horse took off. "Nothing has been more frightening," Todd said.

A more typical picture of Todd — sitting in perfect balance as his horse soars over a huge log — adorns the cover of *One-Day Eventing*, a definitive guide to the sport, written by Todd with Genevieve Murphy. The book, well-illustrated with pictures by Kit Houghton of the author and his wife, Carolyn, gives advice on all aspects of eventing from buying the right horse to preparations for his first event.

Keeping in a rhythm is, we are told, the key to successful cross-country riding. Todd, whose international career began in 1980 when he won Badminton at his first attempt, thinks many riders get in "too much of a state" about not being able to see a stride. "It would be far more profitable for them to concentrate on keeping a rhythm to the fence and avoid interfering with the horse when he jumps it."

Todd, who appears to see a stride when a field's distance from the fence, also emphasises the importance of flat-work. When he started in the sport in his native New Zealand, he "put up" with the dressage in order to get on with the exciting part of riding across country. Yet he changed his mind when he realised he would only be successful if he improved his dressage. Now getting a horse to go

correctly on the flat is as natural to him as winning.

Any equestrian household would benefit from Judith Draper's invaluable reference manual, *The Book of Horses and Horse Care*. Aspects of stable management, from shoeing and clipping to exercise and grooming, are described in detail.

□ *One-Day Eventing*, by Mark Todd with Genevieve Murphy (Aurum Press, £15.99).
□ *The Book of Horses and Horse Care*, by Judith Draper (Lorenz Books, £16.95).
□ *A Modern Horse Herbal*, by Hilary Page Self (Kenilworth Press, £16.95).

JENNY MACARTHUR

Inside story of first hostilities in saga of sporting conflict

THIS has been a frustrating year for rugby union in many ways, therefore it seems appropriate to select as by far the best book the sport can offer a title that is not available in Britain: however, there is still time for HarperSports to put Peter FitzSimons's *The Rugby War* into the market here, particularly as the saga of which he writes may yet have some distance to run.

FitzSimons, the former Australia lock who is now a journalist with the *Sydney Morning Herald*, offers the inside story on how rugby's amateur house suddenly toppled like a deck of cards during 1995. More particularly, he examines the threat posed to the game's establishment by the self-styled World Rugby Corporation (WRC), a concept involving a worldwide series of rugby franchises developed by Ross Turnbull and like-minded business colleagues in Australia.

British readers may find FitzSimons's matzy style grates somewhat, but they will acknowledge that it lends immediacy to the events of the past 18 months. The book is a revelation because, before this decade, rugby attracted only limited interest from big business; as this past year has proved, business is now inclined to take a very close

interest in the game, whether it be Sir John Hall in Newcastle or Rupert Murdoch's associates in both hemispheres. *The Rugby War* may prove to be the only first chapter of what is to come.

One of the constant complaints made of rugby union is that it is inaccessible to the casual viewer because of the complexity of its laws. Two books this year offer assistance. Ed Morrison, who

refereed the World Cup final last year, in conversation with an established author in Derek Robinson, has produced an enjoyable ramble through the rulebook in *Rugby - A Referee's Guide*.

It is a "what if" book, in that Robinson paints scenarios and Morrison offers the official — and sometimes unofficial — response. As an adjunct, Mike Mortimer, the Leicester forward who became a referee, has penned *Rugby Law Explained*, a series of articles which have appeared in match programmes at Welford Road.

Autobiographies are thinner on the ground this year — Scott Hastings, that ebullient centre, is one of the few, while Jonathan Davies is as swift off the mark with *Code Breaker* as he was on

the break in both rugby codes. But there is a topicality, as well as sadness, about the publication of *The History of the British Lions* by Clem Thomas, the former Wales flanker and rugby correspondent of *The Observer* who died during the autumn.

Thomas, a great enthusiast for the Lions concept, would have been happy to leave this as his valedictory, yet the future of British Isles tours remains in doubt: unless the home unions place their belief in the idea — rather than concentrating their efforts on exclusively national tours — it may not survive long.

□ *The Rugby War*, by Peter FitzSimons (HarperSports).

□ *Rugby - A Referee's Guide*, by Ed Robinson and Derek Robinson (Collins Willow, £5.99).

□ *Rugby Law Explained*, by Mike Mortimer (Kaifos Press, £4.95).

□ *Great Scott*, by Scott Hastings with Derek Douglas (Mainstream Publishing, £14.99).

□ *Code Breaker*, by Jonathan Davies with Peter Corrigan (Bloomsbury, £16.99).
□ *The History of the British Lions*, by Clem Thomas (Mainstream Publishing, £15.99).

DAVID HANDS

Squaring up to big issue in the ring

THE question of the validity of boxing as a sport is never far from our minds and comes sharply into focus every time a tragedy happens in the ring. At such times, most of us shake our heads, have recriminations, applaud new safety measures and carry on as we are. But a growing number of people are wondering whether it does credit to a civilized society to allow such a brutal sport to flourish.

So we must thank Hugh McIlvanney for tackling the subject head-on in his book, *McIlvanney on Boxing*. It is a brilliant essay that marshals the arguments of both sides in the boxing debate.

McIlvanney needs no introduction because he is well-known as the finest writer in the world on boxing and so what he says here is worth the consideration of the British Medical Association (BMA) and the boxing lobby.

In his book, which is a collection of his articles in *The Observer* and *The Sunday Times* from 1966 to the present day, he gives a warning against the sloganising of the BMA and the smugness of those who profit from the game.

Most readers of *The Observer* and *The Sunday Times* will be familiar with the articles, but

they are worth reading again. The book is in two parts. The first covers the golden years of boxing in the 1970s, the second, from the 1980s to the present. The outstanding piece is still McIlvanney's account of the events that led to the tragedy of Johnny Owen in Los Angeles.

If McIlvanney's book is for general consumption, the re-issue of the Sugar Ray Robinson story by Dave Anderson will be

welcomed by boxing fans, particularly the older ones.

Robinson held the attention of fans for a quarter of a century from 1940. He had 202 contests, winning 109 of them on knockouts.

It is refreshing to find in these days of braggaris how much he respected his opponents. He said of his defeat by Randolph Turpin: "I was beaten by a better man."

□ *McIlvanney on Boxing*, by Hugh McIlvanney (Mainstream Publishing, £15.99).

□ *Sugar Ray*, The Sugar Ray Robinson Story, by Sugar Ray Robinson with Dave Anderson (Robson Books Ltd, £10.99).

SRIKUMAR SEN

It ain't necessarily so, but it just might be

Imagination doesn't often get a credit in science documentaries. When it does — as in last night's *Horizon*: Noah's Flood (BBC2) — the mention tends to be apologetic. However, two respectable American earth scientists decided to employ their imaginations, it seems, to locate a real site for the mythical flood mentioned in the Epic of Gilgamesh as well as the Bible. And they were deemed OK by other scientists, so we could stop worrying. They made no specific references to rain, arks, cubits or doves, incidentally, but their theory sounded convincing. When sea levels rose, around seven thousand years ago, salt water surged through the Bosphorus and flooded the basin (formerly holding a fresh-water lake) that we now know as the Black Sea. A dike of the indigenous people yelled: "Hey! Make like a dinosaur!" and scurried.

Noah's Flood was admittedly a bit hard to follow, at times. In the process of proving their hypothesis, Walter Mignani and Bill Ryan removed long cylindrical "cores" from the bed of the Black Sea, and cut them open — and though I said dutifully "Oh" and "Ah", I couldn't really understand what the solid sludge revealed. All I knew was that whenever a balancing sceptical comment was elicited from a woman Oxford historian, I automatically took sides with the guys with the drilling gear. This historian, presumably a Gilgamesh expert, snootily pool-pooled their discoveries from the comfort of a pleasant room, with a garden dancing in the window behind. Somehow or other, she lost sympathy before she opened her mouth.

The best moment was filmed at Niagara. Of the two scientists, Walter was the "character". He habitually wore reading glasses, light against his forehead, like a clerk in Dickens. At Niagara, festooned in larkie oilskins, he pointed to the falls and yelled above the roar that the volume of water tumbling into the Black Sea would have been 1,000 times greater than what was flowing here. "How do you know?" asked an unseen interviewer. Walter was astonished by the question, and affronted too. "I calculated it," he said. "What do you mean, how do I know? I calculated it." And, of course, there was no answer to that.

Elsewhere last night imagination was put to other uses. Enid Blyton, the subject of *Secret Lives* (Channel 4), used it to block out pain, of course, and very successfully too. Rarely has a documentary cried out so loudly for the services of Rent-a-Shrink, without result. Blyton was revealed as a rigorously divided personality — the writer, who thrilled in print about her happy home and dear, dear children; and

very long ago. But here we had the testimonies of Blyton's well-known daughters who disagree about their childhood, one surviving with a benign smile, the other a story-faced casualty. We had the gardener's daughter, too, who bitterly catalogued Blyton's cruelties and misdemeanours, without understanding the concept of denial, which explained the whole lot. When Blyton's dog Bob was ill, for example, the great writer refused to accept it when he died, she continued to write his adventures as if nothing had happened. Or was it plain hypocrisy, really? Or was it something else?

A couple of things were annoying in Sally Greengard's film. The old-fashioned typewriter may have been a nice device, but a faster typist might surely have been found. Enid Blyton produced 10,000 words a day, after all. Hunt-and-peck was probably not her style. The other glaring omission was Blyton's child-readers, who would hardly be difficult to trace. What effect did Blyton's stories have on them — written, as they were, from a peculiarly wounded psyche? Evidently her escapism stories (in which the miseries of family life played no part) touched a common chord, but objectively speaking they are still very, very weird.

Finally, *Giving Tongue* (BBC2) was the last of the Monday night "Wicked Women" films, and I can't say I'm sorry. They have been exhausting to watch. Last night's was written by Emma Fortune and directed by Stefan Schwartz — not a name I knew before — and watching it was a constant struggle to suspend a disbelief which just kept crashing down like heavy paper chains. I mean, can you really park a horse-box in Parliament Square, while you pop into the House to see a chum? The IRA should be informed at once. Meanwhile the similarly lip-nibbling plot concerned a new Labour MP (in a new Labour government) whose Private Member's Bill to abolish hunting is ultimately passed by both Houses, much to the particular consternation of her lesbian former lover, Barb, who is employed by a "Master". Does it sound silly when it's put like that? Mm, yes, I suppose it does.



Lynne Truss

the woman, who hardly recognised her progeny if she met them at the bathroom door. The interesting question, of course, was whether she believed what she wrote, while writing it. Since her imagination was her happiest place, I have absolutely no doubt she did. Most of us knew a lot about Enid Blyton already — *Bookmarks* dramatised biography, with Maureen Lipman, wasn't broadcast so

REVIEW

CHOICE

Respect (ITV, 8.30pm)
Nick Berry sets aside the laidback police constable of *Heartbeat* to play the grittier role of a boxer forced to quit the ring because of eye damage. It is the start of a downward slide. Unable to support his wife (Jayne Ashbourne) and their new baby, he drinks too much and gets into bad company. The greenwashed, Richard La Plante, is not content to let it there. As baby Benjamin is rushed off to hospital, Berry's Bobby becomes involved in a dodgy nightclub venture, a punch-up and a visit by the police. But this is one of those dramas where the hero's lowest point is also the start of his salvation, as the hidden toughness "bobby" starts to claw his way back to respectability. Although the show is a one-off, do not rule out the possibility of a series if the ratings are good enough.

The Seventh Wonder of the World (BBC2, 9.40pm)
A team of French and Egyptian archaeologists descends on Alexandria, hoping to make a rare find. The city once boasted one of the wonders of the ancient world. This was a lighthouse, 400 feet high, with a light visible from 40 miles away. Over the centuries earthquakes and landslides destroyed the ancient city. By the 14th century the last remains of the lighthouse had crumbled into the sea and were thought to have been lost. But Jean-Yves Esnoff is not persuaded. His divers scour the seabed and come up with an extraordinary haul of sphinxes, obelisks and tablets. But can any of their finds be linked to the lighthouse? The climax of a gripping film is an intervention by a British archaeologist, Honor Frost. Despite her 75 years she pulls on her diving suit and goes underwater to identify a crucial piece of evidence.

Network First: Conspicuous Consumption (ITV, 10.40pm)
It is strange to find Yorkshire Television making a documentary about Harvey Nichols until you remember that the top people's Knightsbridge store recently opened a branch in Leeds. The Yorkshire folk evidently liked the idea, because the shop ran out of £400 handbags on the first day. But this film is mainly about the London end and gives the impression that the typical customers are extremely wealthy women with a lot of time on their hands. "It's a very happening dress," trills one Amanda Wilson-Barrett, as she adds to her already large collection of little black numbers. Asked to define the character of the store, the managing director uses the word exclusively three times in one sentence. As the till rings up £1,425, and that is just for one outfit, you find it easy to believe him.

Nightmare: The Birth of Horror (BBC1, 10.55pm)
Christopher Frayling's four-part series uncovers the origins of the some of the great 19th-century horror stories and explores their continuing impact. As an academic who specialises in popular culture, as well as a polished television performer, he is just the man for the task. We spot him first in a boat on Lake Geneva, wearing a Rupert Bear scarf and about to tell us how the 18-year-old Mary Godwin had the terrifying dream which inspired Dr Frankenstein and the monster. Frayling is a man of many talents. Percy Bysshe Shelley, visiting Lord Byron in his Swiss villa, and how they ended up telling ghost stories, is not entirely unfamiliar but Frayling reconstructs it in compelling detail. The pity is that he leaves himself little time to cover Frankenstein in the cinema.

Network First: Conspicuous Consumption (ITV, 10.40pm)
A portrait of Harvey Nichols the Leeds and London based store (1) (179272)
11.40 HUNTER (369956)
12.40 am NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE EXTRA (6038437)
1.30 FILM: False Witness (1988) Murder mystery starring Phyllis Redford, Philip Thomas, and Teri Austin. Directed by Arthur Allan Seidelman (833963)
1.35 LATE & LOUD (563925)
4.05 THE CHART SHOW (17754505)
5.00 FRANCES BISSSELL'S WESTCOUNTRY CHRISTMAS (64692)
5.30 NEWS (79673)

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7.00pm Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (175455) 8.00pm Star Trek: Voyager (175456) 8.30pm Star Trek: Voyager (175457) 9.00pm Star Trek: Voyager (175458) 9.30pm Star Trek: Voyager (175459) 10.00pm Star Trek: Voyager (175460) 10.30pm Star Trek: Voyager (175461) 11.00pm Star Trek: Voyager (175462) 11.30pm Star Trek: Voyager (175463) 12.00am Star Trek: Voyager (175464) 12.30am Star Trek: Voyager (175465) 1.00am Star Trek: Voyager (175466) 1.30am Star Trek: Voyager (175467) 2.00am Star Trek: Voyager (175468) 2.30am Star Trek: Voyager (175469) 3.00am Star Trek: Voyager (175470) 3.30am Star Trek: Voyager (175471) 4.00am Star Trek: Voyager (175472) 4.30am Star Trek: Voyager (175473) 5.00am Star Trek: Voyager (175474) 5.30am Star Trek: Voyager (175475) 6.00am Star Trek: Voyager (175476) 6.30am Star Trek: Voyager (175477) 7.00am Star Trek: Voyager (175478) 7.30am Star Trek: Voyager (175479) 8.00am Star Trek: Voyager (175480) 8.30am Star Trek: Voyager (175481) 9.00am Star Trek: Voyager (175482) 9.30am 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RUGBY UNION 36

Ashton's future
as coach of
Bath in doubt

SPORT

TUESDAY DECEMBER 17 1996

SPORTS BOOKS 37

Reading into the
fears that haunt
Seles's return



Chaos as Formula One stands accused



Williams on trial

IT HAS been a long time coming but last night Formula One motor racing finally got the bad news it had been dreading. On February 20 next year, barely two weeks before the start of the new season, Frank Williams and five other men will be brought to trial on manslaughter charges arising from the death of Ayrton Senna at Imola in May 1994.

To some, perhaps even some in the Williams team, the news will come as a relief, a preliminary indication that we may be about to find out what really happened in those few seconds before Senna's Williams-Renault hit the wall at the Tamborello corner in the San Marino Grand Prix and his helmet was pierced by a metal suspension rod.

It is better that than his death should be shrouded in rumour and

innuendo for years to come, fertile ground for ever-widening speculation. Patrick Head, the Williams technical director and another of those indicted, has already spoken of his desire to take the stand to disprove the theory that one of the greatest grand prix drivers was killed because of the failure of a weld on his car's steering column.

Last night, though, Formula One was in turmoil, bracing itself for a season of chaos with other teams running scared of appearing at the two Italian races scheduled for next year lest any misfortune should befall their drivers.

Flavio Briatore, the Benetton managing director and one of the most influential men in the sport, has already threatened to withdraw both Jean Alesi and Gerhard Berger from the San Marino Grand Prix on

Charges arising from the death of Ayrton Senna could have considerable impact says Oliver Holt

April 27 and the Italian Grand Prix at Monza on September 7.

"I would not risk bringing my team to a country that can convict you for an accident," Briatore said recently at the Bologna Motor Show. "Fatality is part of the game as well." Briatore, an Italian, also owns the Ligier team, which would put its participation at the events in doubt as well.

There was no comment last night from either Max Mosley, the president of the International Motor Sport Federation (FIA) or Bernie Ecclestone, the president of the Formula One Constructors' Association (FOCA), but Ken Tyrrell, the

veteran team owner, hinted that other teams would be nervous about racing in Italy in the light of last night's developments.

"The fact that this can happen to the Williams team," Tyrrell said, "a professional team where every screw and nut and bolt is secured, a team with a reliability record that is impeccable, raises the question 'what chance is there for the rest of us?' If an accident can happen to them, it can happen to anybody. I have no doubt that the teams will be getting together to decide what action to take. It is a matter for great concern because it could affect motor racing around the world."

The Williams team's lawyer, Roberto Causo, would not confirm whether Williams, Head and Adrian Newey, the chief designer of Senna's car, would appear at the trial which will be held in Imola. A conviction for manslaughter under Italian law, which requires that someone be held responsible for any violent death, carries a maximum prison sentence of five years. Most of those found guilty, though, receive suspended sentences.

The Williams team, who had been expecting the news for the past ten days, released an official statement from its headquarters in Grove, Oxfordshire, regretting the news of the charges. "We do not believe that the charges are well founded," it said, "and intend to do all that is necessary to defend our position."

Federico Bendinelli, an official of

the company that runs the track, Giorgio Foggi, director of the track at the time of the accident, and Roland Brunserade, the director of that season's Formula One races were the other people accused.

The charges have caused consternation throughout the sport because there is no precedent for them. Colin Chapman, the owner of the Lotus team, was pressured by the Italian authorities after the death of his driver, Jochen Rindt, at Monza in 1970. He did not return the following year and Lotus raced under the name WorldWide Racing for that grand prix before things returned to normal.

Some form of compromise may be reached this year, too, of course, but last night the 1997 Formula One season was skulking under a dark cloud before it had even begun.

Tour party down to 13 fit players

England options restricted by injury to Irani

FROM SIMON WILDE IN BULAWAYO

ENGLAND, struggling to maintain morale after a disheartening start to their winter tour, may be choosing from only 13 available players when the first Test match against Zimbabwe begins here tomorrow. Ronnie Irani, the party's one all-rounder, was yesterday taken to hospital in Harare for X-rays on his lower back. If they revealed that damage had been done, he will return home and a replacement will be summoned.

Irani left the field complaining of back pain on the final day of England's match with Matabele last Friday and although he soon returned, he did not add to the 14 balls he had bowled earlier. He underwent fitness tests before the first one-day international on Sunday — which England lost by two wickets — and declared himself able to play, but made little impact on the game.

The England management,

understandably disappointed that Irani said he was 100 per cent fit and then failed to come through the game successfully, made a swift decision to get to the root of the problem. As David Lloyd, the England coach, said: "The issue is clouded by the fact that the injury is to a pivotal player." Even if the hospital tests gave Irani the all-clear, the news would not remove one of the main weaknesses of this England party, which is that it does not as yet possess an all-rounder worth his place in the side as batsman and bowler. A fully-fit Irani could, in theory, fulfil that role, but in the first three weeks of the tour, he did little in either department.

If Irani returns home, his replacement will come from the A team that completed an outstanding tour of Australia at the weekend and contained three all-rounders — Craig

White, Adam Hoolioake and Mark Ealham. As the most effective bowler of the three, White would be clear favourite to be drafted in, but he could not arrive in time to be considered for the Test match tomorrow.

Irani's injury only highlights the gamble England took in not finding a replacement for Dominic Cork when he withdrew from the tour two days before it started for personal reasons. Lloyd was prepared to concede yesterday that England were a player light for their needs in Zimbabwe, which is perhaps a reflection of the fact that they have found the cricket here more uncompromising than they expected.

To give their side balance for the first Test match, England had already decided to play Alec Stewart as a batsman-wicketkeeper, but Irani could still have featured as one of the seam bowlers, though he has bowled fewer than 40 overs on tour.

His injury may be a legacy of him being obliged to remodel his bowling action two years ago after sustaining serious back damage during his first season with Essex, whom he joined from Lancashire in 1994.

One of the few positive things to come out of the defeat on Sunday was the impressive international debut of Chris Silverwood, who has thus put himself firmly in the frame for the Test match. Silverwood dismissed Grant Flower with the last ball of his first over, Andy Flower in his fifth over and barely bowled a bad ball in ten overs.

"He was asked to bowl line and length and followed his instructions to the letter," Lloyd said yesterday. "He's a no-nonsense cricketer. Off the field, you might think he is just a nice lad, but on the field he is aggressive. Under the spotlight and amid all the noise on Sunday, he held up brilliantly."

Praise for Silverwood contrasted starkly with reports of the progress being made by Andy Caddick, who was unexpectedly omitted from the one-day international. "I would like to be impressed," Lloyd said.

Andy Flower, who gave up the captaincy of Zimbabwe earlier this year, has been appointed coach of Oxford University in succession to Les Lenham. Flower has played club and league cricket in England in recent years.



Irani: back problem



Smith launches a model of the all-British entry he will lead in the next Whitbread race

Britons win backing for crack at the Whitbread

BY EDWARD GORMAN, SAILING CORRESPONDENT

AFTER complex, extremely delicate and intensive negotiations lasting three months, the best British prospect for victory in the Whitbread Round the World Race for many years finally emerged from the shadows yesterday.

Lawrie Smith, the British helmsman, is to lead a one-boat campaign sponsored by Silk Cut with an all-British team in a new Bruce Farr design, with enough money to get him to the start line off Southampton next September with a real chance of winning.

Smith's place at the helm of the Swedish EF Education male boat has been taken by the top American skipper, Paul Cayard, who is expected to bring with him up to five key members of his America's Cup syndicate for the 2000 America's Cup, including John Kostecki.

In the end, a deal that, at various points — including as late as last week — looked like falling apart, has worked out well for all concerned. Magnus Olsson, the operations manager at Team EF, used unprintable language yesterday to describe his initial reaction when he heard Smith might leave, but he is now happy.

"The reason I was angry was because I had built up a good team and then had to start from the beginning again. In the short term, things are not looking so good, but in the long term, it looks pretty good," he said.



Cayard: substitute

No one at EF was prepared to discuss the amount of money the team had received to compensate it for the loss of Smith.

From Smith's point of view, the swap has been completed with just enough time left to get a boat built and complete the necessary trials, though he will continue to benefit from EF's testing programme in the meantime.

Smith now has full control over his campaign and will be able to work with an all-British crew and several of his long-time lieutenants on what he indicated may well be his last crack at the race.

The crew he has chosen so far include Neal McDonald, Adrian Stead, Steve Hayles, Gordon Maguire, Jason Carrington and Russell Pickall, who will be his sail co-ordinator.

The 1997-98 Whitbread looks like being the most exciting so far, with 12 new Whitbread 60s now certain to start and at least three of the old boats from last time joining them.

As Cayard, who has sailed in four America's Cups but never in the Whitbread, put it: "The racing will be much closer and much tighter. It is not one-design, but very close to that."

Challenge positions, page 34

Rovers' patience rewarded with Eriksson signing

BY PETER BALL

BLACKBURN Rovers' search for a manager has ended virtually where it began; in Italy, but in Genoa rather than Milan. Yesterday, they confirmed that Sven Goran Eriksson will become their manager when his contract with Sampdoria expires in July.

"The game is changing and we decided from the start not to restrict ourselves to English managers," Robert Coar, the Blackburn chairman, said yesterday. "It has been some time since Ray Harford left, but we were determined to make the right appointment."

Initial approaches had been made to Roy Hodgson, of Internazionale, but interest there ended when Hodgson signed a new contract with the Milan club. Blackburn clearly hope that Sampdoria will release Eriksson early, with the club in mid-table in Serie A. The indications yesterday, with Sampdoria refusing to allow Eriksson to fly to England for the press conference or even to allow a satellite television link-up, were that relationships are not warm.

"I can't give any interviews about my next club," Eriksson said in a statement. "I can only comment on the club I am currently employed by."

His input in transfer dealings may not have to wait for his arrival. Tony Parkes, the caretaker-manager, will, however, remain in charge of the

team until Eriksson arrives. He will then revert to the post of assistant manager.

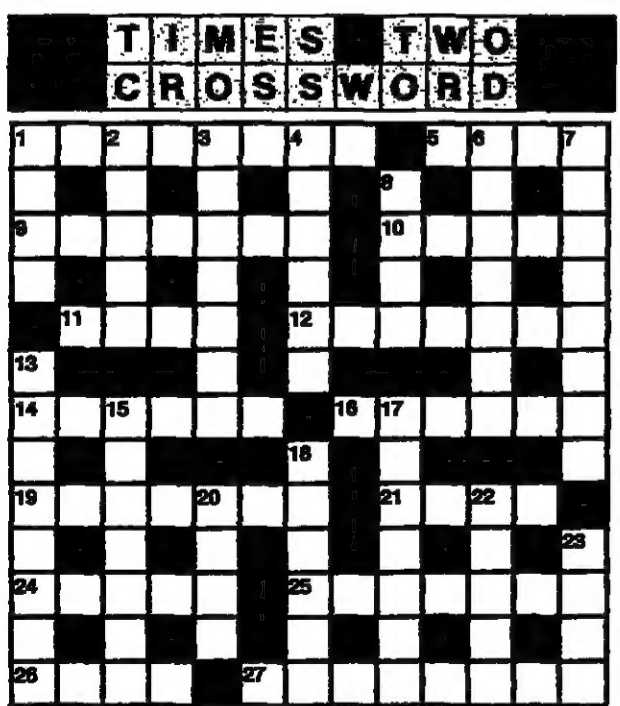
"I'm glad the situation has been sorted out and it is no problem for me to carry on as long as necessary," Parkes said yesterday. His main task will be to ensure that Eriksson still has an FA Carling Premiership club to come to in the summer.

Eriksson, 48, has been charged with a more formidable assignment. "We are confident we have secured the services of a top European coach to underline our ambition to be both a leading club in the Premiership and to compete successfully on a regular basis in European competitions," Coar said.

From his early days with IFK Gothenburg, Eriksson has enjoyed consistent success. Gothenburg won the Uefa Cup and Benfica, under his charge, also reached the final of that competition, while he won league championships in Sweden and Portugal and the Italian Cup with Sampdoria.

Eriksson has signed a three-year contract with Blackburn, at a salary estimated to be not much less than £1 million a year. He can also look forward to having an open cheque-book to recruit players in his rebuilding of a side that has declined badly since winning the championship in 1994-95.

Overseas View, page 36



No 967

- ACROSS
- Wave threateningly (8)
 - Latest information (4)
 - Imply, mean (7)
 - Hunting dog (5)
 - Curve, twist (4)
 - Emergency communication channel (7)
 - Six or Nine, Counties (6)
 - Cry (pig); confess (6)
 - Wet blanket (7)
 - Twelfth of foot (4)
 - Additional (5)
 - Soothing drug; platitude (7)
 - Extinct Mauritian bird (4)
 - Of the intellect (8)
- DOWN
- Hard at work (4)
 - Corner; old German settler (5)
 - Slowly get less (7)
 - Long-handled cutter (6)
 - Difficult to pin down (7)
 - All at once (8)
 - Fired gun (4)
 - Partition on board (8)
 - Acknowledged (officer) (7)
 - Cervantes chivalric Don (7)
 - Farwell (3-3)
 - Byron's amorous Don (4)
 - Old public announcer (5)
 - Telephone inventor, his signal (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 966

ACROSS: 1 Series 5 Past 8 Fund 9 Fraction 10 Vauxhall 11 Awry 12 Wedged 14 Yellow 16 Tomb 18 Optimist 20 Scrounge 21 View 22 Iris 23 Teeter

DOWN: 2 Emulate 3 Index 4 Safe and sound 5 Pitfall 6 Scour 7 Harley Street 13 Gibbons 15 Obscene 17 Occur 19 Movie

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